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**JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE  
ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL**

**“BRITISH JOINT COUNTER-INSURGENCY DOCTRINE – CHINESE WHISPERS FROM  
THE PAST AND A DOOMED FUTURE?”**

by

*Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Layton MBE MERCIAN*



**A paper submitted to the faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defence**

**This paper is entirely my own work except as documented in footnotes.**

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## ABSTRACT

In September 2007, the Chief of the General Staff pointed to a rift between society and the Armed Forces; a rupture of the so-called military covenant, which stemmed from the unpopular wars in which the British Army was engaged. The United Kingdom's commitment to Iraq and Afghanistan, set against the world economic recession, a public and coalition perception of failed UK Defence and Foreign policy in the Region, and in contrast with U.S. military success, continues to polarize UK electoral views; if anything, this is likely to worsen, thereby increasing pressure for force reductions or possibly even military disengagement. The UK population and press remain highly sceptical as to a continued presence and any likelihood of success in Afghanistan. There also appear to be questions regarding British Military Counter-insurgency doctrine following the Iraqi Army Operation "Charge Of The Knights," U.S. Army reinforcement to Multi-National Division South East (Basrah), and the successful implementation of U.S. Counter-insurgency "Petraeus" doctrine. Moreover, the military situation in the Helmand Province, Afghanistan, appears to have deteriorated significantly, despite a 100% increase in British Army force levels. Against this context, British Colonial policing and early guerrilla warfare doctrine, which formed the basis for its modern counter-insurgency counterpart, were reviewed by the author, using India, Malaya and Northern Ireland as Case Studies. The Author's findings point to British Counter-insurgency doctrine being neither truly joint nor appropriately resourced. Both of these conditions are the products and proof, of the extant and recurring rift between society and the government in the United Kingdom, with the Armed forces left to suffer the results.

Until there is formal recognition across all Government Departments that counter-insurgency is not a purely military operation, and that its strategic design and implementation are a civil responsibility, with military support as an enabler, disjointed and incoherent counter-insurgency operations will continue.

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## ABBREVIATIONS/ ACRONYMS

AFM	Army Field Manual
CA	Comprehensive Approach
CGS	Chief of the General Staff
CIRA	Continuity Irish Republican Army
CMMH	Civil Military Mission Helmand
CNN	Cable News Network
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefings
COIN	Counter-Insurgency
CSU	Conflict Stabilisation Unit
DfID	Department for International Development
FCO	Foreign & Commonwealth Office
GWOT	Global War On Terror
IW	Irregular Warfare
IT	Information Technology
JDN	Joint Discussion Note
JDP	Joint Defence Publication
JFSC	Joint Forces Staff College
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MP	Member of Parliament
OC	Officer Commanding
OGD	Other Government Departments
OPSEC	Operational Security
PCRU	Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit
PIRA	Provisional Irish Republican Army

PSNI	Police Service Northern Ireland
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
RUSI	Royal United Services Institute
SO1	Staff Officer Grade 1
TCG	Tasking and Coordination Group
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
USMC	United States Marine Corps
1 STAFFORDS	1 <sup>st</sup> Battalion The Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's)



## INTRODUCTION

The local and national elections planned for 2010 in the United Kingdom, may lead to the formation of a new government, with the potential for significant change in terms of both foreign and defence policy. Irrespective of the outcome, it is unlikely that either of the two major political parties will increase defence expenditure, particularly in light of the current worldwide economic recession. The United Kingdom population and press remain highly sceptical as to the continued presence and any likelihood of success, in Afghanistan.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, during 2009, the military situation in Helmand province, Afghanistan, appears to have deteriorated significantly, despite a 100% increase in British Force levels since 2003, and significant U.S. Army and Marine Corps augmentation.

Such scepticism also remains regarding the original justification for operations within Iraq. On 24th March 2008, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki directed the 1st Iraqi Armoured Division to launch an operation in Basra, codenamed Saulat al-Fursan, meaning Charge of the Knights. It followed what many had called a premature British withdrawal from Basra, having handed over security responsibility to the Basra Provincial Governor and Lieutenant General Mohan. Planned and conducted by Iraqi Armed Forces personnel, the operation was a bold move from Maliki, ultimately strengthening his national political standing as a result of its success.

Interestingly, U.S. military success in Iraq, particularly since the arrival of General Petraeus, has also prompted a degree of internal navel gazing, across broad swathes of the British Defence Community -many have questioned the validity of the current British Army approach to Counter-Insurgency (COIN) operations.

There are rather more worrying trends at home for the British Armed Forces that are currently engaged in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). There is evidence that the unpopular wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan are eroding the covenant that exists between a Serviceman and the Society from whom he is recruited, within which he lives, and that he serves.<sup>2</sup> Arguably, this situation, and the

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<sup>1</sup> In a BBC sponsored poll, released on October 7<sup>th</sup> 2009, of 1,010 people polled on the eighth anniversary of the start of operations, 56% were opposed, 37% in favour, 6% unsure and 1% refused to answer - [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/politics/8292771.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/8292771.stm).

<sup>2</sup> The Military Covenant - A mutual obligation between the Nation, the Army and each individual soldier recognizing the unique nature of military service, which might entail a Soldier being called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice - in the

concomitant media interest have contributed towards the creation of a separate enquiry into the Second Gulf War (Operation IRAQI FREEDOM). Such were the implications regarding the issue and its potential effects on both soldiers and their families, that the former Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Richard Dannatt announced his concerns publically.<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly, the comments contributed to the eventual publication of The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans.<sup>4</sup> However, there have been little in the way of effective Government communiqués regarding why the Long War must continue to be fought in Afghanistan.<sup>5</sup> The author's thesis contends that until there is formal recognition across all Government Departments that counter-insurgency is not a purely military operation, and that its strategic design and implementation are a civil responsibility, with military support as an enabler, disjointed and incoherent counter-insurgency operations will continue.

It is against this backdrop that the British Army continues to fight the Taliban in Helmand and its counter-insurgency doctrine evolves. Commander Field Army, Lieutenant General Sir Graham Lamb has recently produced a Commander's Guide to counter-insurgency, encapsulating his thoughts in brief, and explicitly recognising the debt to Generals Odierno and Petraeus.

The US 'paradoxes', much like T. E. Lawrence's insights were instrumental in my approach. These simple two or three liners made people think at their own level about the difficulties each and every field commander faces when dealing with the complexities that make up COIN. They were used to great effect by Generals Petraeus and Odierno. I have stolen and expanded that work.<sup>6</sup>

As such, there appears to be a shifting tide within traditional counter-insurgency doctrine. Indeed, the British Army's counter-insurgency doctrine is on the cusp of change. Its authoritative document, the Army Field Manual Volume (AFM) 1 Part 10 is currently awaiting clearance for formal publication.

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service of the Nation. In putting the needs of the Nation and the Army before their own, soldiers forego some of the rights enjoyed by those outside the Armed Forces, which is deserving of recognition – for further detail see <http://www.army.mod.uk/join/terms/3111.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-410175/Sir-Richard-Dannatt--A-honest-General.html> - Operation TELIC: the Ministry of Defence's name for both the conflict and post conflict operation in Iraq from 2001 to 2009 (referred by US Department of Defense as Operation IRAQI FREEDOM).

<sup>4</sup> The Cross Government Department paper designed to end any disadvantage that armed service causes for service personnel and their service families.

<sup>5</sup> Those Strategic Communications that have been undertaken have been lost amidst the sensationalist media reporting and negative focus within the British Press about the majority of current Government Policy.

<sup>6</sup> Commander Field Army, *COIN - a Commander's Guide* 2009. p1.

The document explicitly traces its origins back to 1966, and Sir Robert Thompson's seminal work – *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*. Critically, the AFM recognises that those operations between 1966 and 2001 were undertaken against the backdrop of colonial and post-colonial administrations. As such, one could argue that by using Thompson's work as a guide, or reference mark, the new doctrine risks being irrelevant in light of the fundamentally different social, political, military and economic context in which current insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan are being fought. Is it therefore flawed from the outset?

It seems right to question such historical premises, particularly when there was no reference in any of the antecedent doctrine publications and academic works of that time, regarding rational/non rational actors. One had therefore to assume that the political ideals and aspirations that underpin the insurgency were rational. David Galula states that the battle for the population is the major characteristic of revolutionary war.<sup>7</sup> One could argue that in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the insurgent tactics that are used are often ignorant of the population. The population is subservient to the religious ideal - radicalised young men, women and children, who act, or are forced to do so, as suicide bombers are far from rational, at least when viewed from a traditional Muslim or indeed Christian perspective. It is these irrational activities, and the reasoning that underpins them, for which much of the existing doctrine does not, or perhaps cannot, cater. Undoubtedly, such activities enable the insurgent to increase the differential in asymmetry with the government and its forces. Although this is perhaps a rather extreme example, it does highlight the Insurgent's ability to undermine government authority and isolate it further from its electorate or population. Whilst this will be discussed subsequently, there appear to be bounds to the degree of acceptable violence within modern society; as Mao Tse Tung said in his seminal works *On Guerrilla Warfare*,<sup>8</sup> the population are the water amongst which the terrorist fish swim [sic]. It is probably more appropriate to say that the population provides the oxygen upon which the government is reliant to breathe and function. The differing perspectives, those of both the Insurgent, and the Counter Insurgent, will be analysed in more detail in Chapters 1 and 4.

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<sup>7</sup> David Galula, *Counter Insurgency Warfare "Theory and Practice"*, 4th ed.(New York: Fredrick A. Praeger, 1964), p8.

<sup>8</sup> Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerilla Warfare*, trans., Samuel B Griffith II, 1st ed.(University of Illinois Press, 1961), p8.

Arguably, the presence of British Army soldiers deployed in Basra undertaking Civil Military Cooperation tasks until the end of Operation TELIC, indicates a significant failing in Inter-Agency counter-insurgency doctrine; why was the Department for International Development (DfID), the lead UK Government department not leading in such activity? Was there no mechanism for DfID to do so? Was the situation non benign? If the latter was the case should the British Military Drawdown have taken place? In order to understand why this was the case, one must review pre- and post-conflict inter governmental department planning and doctrine. Chapter 7 will review/compare current draft DfID documentation against its joint military counterpart.

The results are at the same time both reassuring and disturbing: the revised military /joint counter-insurgency doctrine is much improved, and contextually relevant; however, the mechanisms for ensuring civil primacy in counter-insurgency operations are insufficiently developed.

As with most philosophical debates, there are always multiple perspectives, on what can appear to be a very simple subject matter. Clausewitz stated that everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult.<sup>9</sup> Clausewitz's commentary applies as much to the successful conduct of joint inter-agency counter-insurgency operations as it does to defining that which is an insurgency. As such, it is not intended to discuss the relative merits, nor indeed the position of Insurgency in relation to Irregular Warfare (IW) – the term IW is being used within the United States of America's Department of Defense and is a topic worthy of separate academic work in itself.<sup>10</sup>

This thesis will focus upon counter-insurgency. It will use a number of colonial and post-colonial policing/counter-insurgency operations as case studies in order to review current joint and inter-agency counter-insurgency doctrine from an historical perspective.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. Michael Howard and Peter Paret, 9th ed.(Alfred A Knopf, 1993), p138.

<sup>10</sup> The Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept Version 1, published in 2007 defines Irregular Warfare as “*a violent struggle among state and non- state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations*” of which counter-insurgency is but one element.

<sup>11</sup> Colonial policing/counter-insurgency operations in India, Malaya, Northern Ireland and Iraq are analysed. India was chosen as it offers a unique insight into colonial governmental support (inter agency/civil primacy), which juxtaposes against more recent expeditionary counter-insurgency operations whilst Malaya is inextricably connected to current doctrine (Thompson). Correspondingly, the Northern Ireland campaign represented the natural genesis of the founding doctrine whilst Iraq offers a very recent insight to its significant challenges and shortcomings.

## PART 1 - DOCTRINE: A PHILOSOPHICAL DEBATE

### Chapter 1 – INSURGENCY

.....Time present and time past  
Are both perhaps present in time future?  
And time future contained in time past...  
.....And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered<sup>12</sup>

One could argue that the aforementioned quotation from T.S. Elliot encapsulates that which is, or rather ought to be, doctrine. Implicit to this, is an assumption that one's activities in the future are based upon that which happened in the past, and more importantly, that the circumstances that relate to both periods are sufficiently similar to ensure relevance. Such a fundamental requirement, is evident in the British Army's definition of doctrine:

A formal expression of military knowledge and thought, that the Army accepts as being relevant at a given time, which covers the nature of current and future conflicts, the preparation of the Army for such conflicts and the methods of engaging in them to achieve success.<sup>13</sup>

Dr. Vardell Nesmith stated that history is mere idle curiosity unless it helps to better understand the present and the future – the same can be said of doctrine.

As such, current British counter-insurgency doctrine, an area in which up until last year was considered to be peerless, should reflect its colonial experiences, in particular that related to insurgencies or colonial policing. An analysis of both the imperial organs of power, and the colonial policing *modus operandi* during both the British Imperial and post Imperial periods, which pre-dates much of the existing British Army counter-insurgency practices, is outlined in Chapter 9.

In order to understand counter-insurgency tactics, there is a requirement to analyse Insurgency, its Ends, Ways and Means. Paraphrasing Clausewitz, David Galula stated that Insurgency is the pursuit of policy of a party, inside a country, by every means.<sup>14</sup> This broad definition encapsulated the traditional Popular insurgencies that were seen for example in China and Malaya, and continue to flourish in some Asian countries. However, modern insurgencies appear even more complex. Dr. John

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<sup>12</sup> TS Eliot, "Burnt Norton", *the Four Quartets*, (London Faber and Faber, 1944).

<sup>13</sup> Prepared under the direction of the Chief of the General Staff, "Design for Military Operations –the British Military Doctrine," (1996), p5.

<sup>14</sup> Galula, p3.

Mackinlay, of Kings College London has been actively involved in the drafting of the British Army's draft counter-insurgency doctrine.<sup>15</sup> He identifies five categories of Insurgency: Popular Insurgency; Militias; Clan or Tribal Rivalry; Feral Gangs and Global Insurgency. They are examined in more detail below, paraphrasing certain elements of Mackinlay's proposal.

The name Popular Insurgency used in this context refers to the symbiotic relationship between the insurgent and the local population. Ideology remains at the core of the Popular Insurgency – as does the population, within which the terrorist lives and from which he plans and fights. When Galula paraphrased Clausewitz, he echoed Mao Tse Tung's theories, which stated that revolutionary war:

...must not be considered as an independent form of warfare.....but one step in total war....with a clearly defined political goal....Guerrilla war basically derives from the masses and is supported by them, it can neither exist nor flourish if it separates itself from their sympathies and cooperation.<sup>16</sup>

The Militia category appears to have achieved greater notoriety as a result of the recent British experiences within Iraq during the post conflict phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom, although nowhere within the doctrine publication is this explicitly stated. Importantly, Mackinlay separates those militias with and without political aspirations, the former of which can be dealt with by military means alone, and the latter with those means used for Popular Insurgency; political, social, and economic means must be used in conjunction with the military component if required. It is probably more accurate to say that the militia can be a specific insurgent component of either the Popular or Global Insurgency, but is not necessarily focussed on either of their political or ideological goals.

Clan or Tribal Rivalries are often extremely violent, though on occasions sporadic. Critically, leadership elements often vie for economic or political influence. Such aspirations and ties bridge generations, are occasionally feudal, and are often criminally focussed. Once again, there is no reason why this specific element cannot be categorised as another potential component within the Popular Insurgency, and more specifically, one that it is likely to be more appropriately resolved by the use of traditional non-military policing methods.

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<sup>15</sup> Land Warfare Centre, "Army Field Manual - Countering Insurgency," ed. The British Army(2009), pp2-A1 to 2-A-3.

<sup>16</sup> Tse-Tung, pp41, 44.

Mackinlay recognises that the effect of a Feral Gang's activities is localised, and representative of broader social problems, all of which ought to be addressed by non-military means. Other than its size perhaps, many of the Gang's activities might be similar to non-politically orientated militias. Again, the Feral Gang could be contained within either the Popular Insurgency, or indeed the Global Insurgency, representing another indication of the existence of insurgency-like conditions

Baron Antoine Henri Jomini tells us that Wars of Opinion where one party desires to propagate its doctrine, such as religion for example, are the most deplorable, for like national wars, they enlist the worst passions, and become vindictive, cruel and terrible.<sup>17</sup> That would certainly appear to be the case when one reviews Insurgents' discriminate use of violence against both Multi-National Forces, and at times, significant numbers of the population in both Iraq and Afghanistan, many of whom, to varying degrees, supported the insurgents – it is this latter point that has led to increased isolation of Al Qaeda in northern Iraq. However, the Modern or Global Insurgency remains essentially similar in terms of its organisation when compared to the Popular Insurgency; in other words, it is most often cellular. The key difference lies in its global reach, which affects the Insurgency's recruiting, finance and information operations, the latter of which is a major challenge when affecting non-state perceptions across the world – such external perceptions are becoming increasingly visible to most if not all elements of affected populations.

Perhaps one can view the aforementioned types of insurgency as a spectrum, across, or within which, Insurgency can exist. Indeed one might postulate that such a spectrum offers a Five Block<sup>18</sup> model, although it is contextually distinct to that which Krulak<sup>19</sup> articulated. The five constituent elements, some of which co-exist, are by no means mutually exclusive, and can occur at various stages within an Insurgency, all of which military forces and government departments might encounter in counter-insurgency operations.

Equally, it is self evident that no insurgency is the same as another. Their causes are often complex, and normally far too numerous to mention. However, a number of them are worthy of further

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<sup>17</sup> Baron Antoine Henri de Jomini, *The Art of War*(1838), p35.

<sup>18</sup> General Charles C Krulak USMC (Retired) postulated that the battlefield was becoming increasingly complex and that soldiers would be required to operate across the entire spectrum of conflict within the space of three contiguous city blocks.

<sup>19</sup> General Charles C Krulak, ""The Strategic Corporal: Leadership in the Three Block War" " *Marines Magazine* (1999).

investigation insofar as they will illuminate a number of factors or conditions, which can be grouped generically. Such grouping will ensure relevancy in the broadest sense to a subsequent insurgency, and with it, to modern counter-insurgency doctrine; in other words their contemporary utility is bounded neither by time nor social, theological or geo political factors. The Insurgents' generic requirements are outlined in more detail in Chapter 4. What remains key is the manner in which the military component and the government respond to an insurgency. These ways and means of dealing with such insurgencies will be discussed in Chapters 5 to 11, using Case Studies of colonial policing/counter-insurgency operations in India, Malaya, Northern Ireland and Iraq.



## Chapter 2 – COUNTERING THE INSURGENCY: DEFINITIONS & CHALLENGES

Having defined Insurgency, from both a traditional and arguably more modern perspective, it is important to explain that which is required to counter it. As intimated in the introduction, the focus of discussion is deliberately narrow, omitting to review Irregular Warfare as a whole. The British Army defines counter-insurgency as those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological and civic actions taken to defeat insurgency. It requires a multi-faceted approach that addresses the political, economic, social, cultural and security dimensions of the unrest.<sup>20</sup>

Traditionally, both practitioners and academics have referred to UK counter-insurgency doctrine as being focussed upon hearts and minds. This is viewed as a British concept in origin. Indeed, most academics refer to its linkage to Field Marshall Sir Gerald Templer, who was High Commissioner and Director of Military Operations during the Malaya Emergency – he stated that the Emergency was a battle for the hearts and minds of the people.<sup>21</sup>

However, Paul Dixon<sup>22</sup> states that its antecedents go back much further to the War of Independence in North America, arguably the largest and most unsuccessful counter-insurgency campaign in which the United Kingdom was involved:

The Revolution was effected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people; a change in their religious sentiments, of their duties and obligations...This radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people was the real American Revolution.<sup>23</sup>

But what do we mean by hearts and minds? The aforementioned quote infers distinct factors - objective and subjective. Indeed, the subjective undoubtedly affect the objective, altering cognitive perception and thereby leading to intuitive responses. Dixon goes further, and defines the constituent elements of hearts and minds as follows:

Hearts – winning the emotional support of the people,

Minds – the people as pursuing their “rational self interest.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Land Warfare Centre, p1-3.

<sup>21</sup> John Cloake, *Templer, Tiger of Malaya: The Life of Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer* (London: Harrap, 1985), p477.

<sup>22</sup> Paul Dixon, "'Hearts and Minds'? British Counter-Insurgency from Malaya to Iraq," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 3 (2009): p361.

<sup>23</sup> An extract from a letter to H Niles written in 1818 by John Adams, Second President of the United States of America - cited in footnote to Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.: p363.

Dixon's concise definitions lie at the centre of all counter-insurgency doctrine. In these definitions the impact of adversely affecting the heart, of losing the emotional support of the people, is more profound, as it alters both individual and subsequently societal perception, or rather objectivity of counter-insurgency activity. Once objectivity is lost, it is significantly more difficult to overcome, particularly when the mind now contains pre-conceived ideals and beliefs: paradigms. The means by which counter insurgents can mitigate the impact, or prevent such occurrences in the first place, are discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Such counter-insurgency / mitigation plans are generally predicated on Insurgent rationality – in other words that an Insurgent's actions, direct or by proxy, and its causes, are rational. For those counter insurgents operating beyond the bounds of a Just War philosophy, it is difficult, if not impossible to rationalise an Insurgent's decision to act personally or use a child or disabled person, as a human proxy bomb. It is highly unlikely that there is a direct means by which such irrationality can be overcome. Any counter-insurgent response must protect or reassure the victims of such irrationality – in other words, the population – whilst further isolating the insurgent, perhaps by non-military means and ways. Indirect methods include physical protection, separation and/or barriers, or Influence Operations, aimed at the population. Reassuringly, it appears that such irrationality is bounded by the tolerance of the population; at least in a modern context. During and before the Chinese Revolutionary War, Mao Tse Tung was able to murder activists, lords, masters, and in particular, rural peasants<sup>25</sup> whom he professed to protect, on an unprecedented scale.<sup>26</sup> Although there are exceptions to the rule, such as the influence of Nazism during the 1930s in Germany, societal tolerance or acceptance of such activity within a more open and advanced society during modern times appears to have diminished. Whilst less feudal than China was at the time of the People's Revolution, Iraq witnessed the increased alienation of Al Qaeda during 2007 because of the level of attrition against innocent civilians caused by car bombing in Baghdad and northern Iraq.

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<sup>25</sup> Jung Chang, *Mao - the Unknown Story*, 1st ed.(London: Anchor, 2006), pp41, 42, 54.

<sup>26</sup> Such levels of violence continued for a number of likely reasons: it was more of a social norm, media/ passage of information was slow; levels of literacy were low; and the Chinese Communist Party's ruthless tactics, targeting everyone, even those ideologically sympathetic to communism, but posing a threat to either individual or ideological progression, generated an enormous amount of fear.

When state sponsored use of force (by police, paramilitaries or military personnel) is excessive, its impact often leads the population to question not only the ways and means of defeating the insurgency, but also the ends in themselves, isolating the population from the government as opposed to the insurgent. The most prevalent cause of such incidents is neglect or forgetfulness of core counter-insurgency principles, which are outlined below.

Primacy is defined by Collins English Dictionary as the state of being first in rank, grade or order.<sup>27</sup> It is a key component within counter-insurgency operations. All counter insurgent elements, civil and military must understand the campaign ways, means and ends. Crucially, they must understand who is responsible for leading, supporting and coordinating the ways and means. Whilst military doctrine recognizes the requirement for military ways and means to subordinate themselves to achieving political ends, the reality of achieving this is more complex. Inter-agency sensitivities, differing organisational cultures and structures, restrictive legislative requirements and conflicting agency methods or ideologies often lead to divergent ends. Both the British Post-Conflict Analysis of Iraq<sup>28</sup> published in 2005, and the British Joint Discussion Note 4/05<sup>29</sup> recognised some of the aforementioned shortcomings and challenges. Some remediation took place, although deltas remained, including incoherent command structures, responsibilities, and ineffective interagency doctrine; these will be discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

The Collins English Dictionary defines legitimacy as being accordant with law or with established legal forms and requirements and which conform to recognized principles or accepted rules and standards.<sup>30</sup> Chapter 1 discussed the central position of the population in relation to the Ends of the counter-insurgency campaign plan. It follows therefore that the impact of counter-insurgency operations will affect them, militarily, or otherwise, and directly or indirectly; maintenance of the moral high ground, or pursuance of their cognitive approval, must always be a tenet, which guides joint and inter-agency Lines of operation. Legitimacy, before, during and after counter-insurgency operations, is

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<sup>27</sup> <http://www.collinslanguage.com/results.aspx>.

<sup>28</sup> Assistant Chief of the General Staff, *Stability Operations in Iraq (Op Telic 2-5) - an Analysis from the Land Perspective* (2005).

<sup>29</sup> Director General Joint Doctrine and Concepts, *The Comprehensive Approach* 2006.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.collinslanguage.com/results.aspx>.

central to the speedy progression of such Lines of operation. There are two areas linked to legitimacy, which will be analysed subsequently in Chapters 8, 10 and 11: levels of state-sponsored military and/or paramilitary coercion, often necessary, but impacting upon legality and legitimacy; cultural sensitivity, which within certain counter-insurgency environments must be disproportionately weighted in favour of the population's cultural/theological heritage. This can often lead to a dilution of political ideals/objectives, which for western liberal democracies that are involved in expeditionary counter insurgencies might be unpalatable.<sup>31</sup>

Effective governance during counter-insurgency operations is key. Its success is manifestly affected by governmental organisation / structure. Clear delineation of responsibilities is necessary for effective civil primacy, and with it, the maintenance of legitimacy. The traditional colonial means of ensuring effective governance and the current shortcomings within coalition operations will be discussed further in Chapters 8 and 9.

Recent counter-insurgency campaigns have highlighted the challenges that agencies face regarding personnel security. Both Iraq and Afghanistan were, or remain for the main part, non-permissive in terms of the level of violence. At present, inter-agency rules regarding acceptable levels of security for the conduct of agency work, are prohibitively restrictive; the net effect is the requirement for soldiers to undertake many of the agency tasks on a routine basis, and an increase in the number of contractors in the absence of, or augmenting, the military component. This represents a significant constraint to agency operations and is overly burdensome on the military component, itself being largely unqualified to undertake such tasks. The ability of agencies to mitigate its impact must be addressed if an inter-agency approach is to be successful; at present it is not. The regulations restricting their freedom within non-benign environments must be reviewed if the military, economic and political counter-insurgency activities are to take place concurrently. If government policy is unyielding in this area, then soldiers must be qualified to undertake such tasks, the impact of which would be to place additional and unsustainable manpower pressure on the Army. In addition, there needs to be political

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<sup>31</sup> Such ideals might include the extent of democracy, or even basic human rights, which are inalienable to citizens of the United States of America.

acceptance of greater risk regarding delayed achievement of strategic goals, in light of less-qualified or able military personnel undertaking inter-agency tasks.

## Chapter 3 – GREAT BRITAIN’S COUNTER-INSURGENCY DNA: APE OR MAN?

### Theories And Thinkers

British counter-insurgency doctrine is quite explicit in tracing its roots back to Sir Robert Thompson, and his published works *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam*.<sup>32</sup> There is only limited mention of T.E. Lawrence and the Arab uprising, and no references to previous campaigns in Mesopotamia, Afghanistan or Lord Kitchener and the Boer War.

In 1966, Sir Robert Thompson published the first in a trilogy of books regarding Insurgency. Having spent 12 years in Malaya during the Insurgency, and headed the British Advisory Mission in Vietnam between 1961 and 1965, he possessed a wealth of first-hand knowledge of governmental and military strategy and tactics required to defeat insurgency. His published works outlined the requirement for civil primacy and a holistic approach to counter the insurgency; crucially, this was enabled or supported by the Armed Forces and State Security apparatus. He distilled his experience into five fundamental principles:

The government must have a clear political aim: to establish and maintain a free, independent and united country, which is politically and economically stable and viable.

The government must function in accordance with law.

The government must have an overall plan.

The government must give priority to defeating the political subversion, not the guerrilla.

In the guerrilla phase of the war, a government must secure its base first.<sup>33</sup>

Thompson’s principles are used as a reference point in current British counter-insurgency doctrine because he views insurgencies in a more holistic fashion, raising himself above the tactical minutiae – the holistic approach views counter-insurgency operations as politically and socially led, with the military line of operations enabling or supporting the others. That is not to say that tactical events cannot have an operational or strategic impact. In this respect, Thompson remains true to Clausewitz’ theory of war itself and its duality. The military element of the counter-insurgency operation/campaign is but one of the means of achieving the political ends. Thompson’s principles, their reasoning and

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<sup>32</sup> RF Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency; Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam*(Chatto & Windus, 1972).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, pp51 - 58.

context, will subsequently serve as a guide and basis for discussion of existing doctrine, which when combined with the case studies, will highlight a number of inter-agency and military shortcomings.

When referring to basic operational concepts, and their implementation on the ground, Thompson groups activities under distinct phases Clearing, Holding, Winning and Won.<sup>34</sup> Clearing and Holding refer to military operations designed to create the security conditions for civil activities undertaken in the Winning and Won Stages. The terminology confirms the heritage of current doctrine.<sup>35</sup>

The duration and violent nature of the current insurgency in Afghanistan has led to increased public concern regarding the repetition of Vietnam. The impact of such concerns on domestic politics has led to an emerging trend: political nervousness, combined with societal aversion regarding the use of the military instrument of power. Interestingly, the dialogue is counter to a number of the well-known “Weinberger” principles and does perhaps hint at limitations in traditional counter-insurgency doctrine.<sup>36</sup> Recent counter-insurgency operations, such as Iraq<sup>37</sup> and Afghanistan have had vague political goals, with for example the latter containing relative secondary clauses such as over time or hopes of Afghan led security. These now appear to be more central to defining success,<sup>38</sup> most likely because such clauses can be achieved more easily and quickly, and can mitigate pressure at home/war weariness.<sup>39</sup> The aim of such campaigns now appears to be not to win a war, rather it is not to lose it. One can see parallels to the UN operation in Korea in 1951, which resulted in neither a victory nor defeat for the United States. Whilst such limitations may make expeditionary operations such as Afghanistan less likely in the future, their military and inter-agency implications need to be enshrined within counter-insurgency doctrine, and in particular Campaign Design and appropriate military objectives.

Two of Thompson’s fundamental principles are problematic, at least in the context of the current

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., p111.

<sup>35</sup> Both British and US Army doctrine refer to “Clear, Secure, Hold and Build” phases within counter-insurgency operations.

<sup>36</sup> Casper Weinberger, Secretary of State for Defence within the Reagan Administration, detailed six criterion for decisions regarding the use of the Military: Vital national interests must be at stake, Commit resources to win, Clearly defined military and political objectives, Continually reassess the relationship between objectives and the use of force, There must be assurance and support from the American public and Congress and, Force must be a last resort.

<sup>37</sup> Political and strategic objectives in relation to Iraq are discussed in more detail in Chapter 11, in particular focusing upon the transition from Phase III to Phase IV operations during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.

<sup>38</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/politics/8237642.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/8237642.stm).

<sup>39</sup> There is also a need to ensure effective Strategic communications, particularly regarding relative levels of Security.

enduring counter-insurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The first of these refers to the requirement for the government to have a clear political aim: to establish and maintain a free, independent and united country, which is politically and economically stable and viable.<sup>40</sup>

Western views regarding democracy are very often at odds with cultures that are of a different accord. One could perhaps include within such a grouping, certain Islamic nations, or even emerging countries – this is particularly the case with theocracies. That is not to say that such nations are necessarily susceptible to insurgency, rather their cultural paradigm is distinct to the western democratic or capitalist counterpart; understanding the implications of this paradigm difference is central to understanding the population, and as such confirming the nature of the decisive points that lead towards the political end state. The implications of such cultural paradigms are self-evident: the western ideological perspective is anathema to certain Islamic nations; one dimensional if you will. This contrast is as extreme and threatening to certain Islamic nations, as is Global Terrorism to America. That said, we are perhaps on the verge of seeing certain changes to such one-dimensional policies, with a more pragmatic and less idealistic approach in their implementation in counter-insurgency operations.<sup>41</sup> What is acceptable security in Helmand province, Afghanistan will of course never be the same as New Hampshire, rather a compromise, acceptable to the indigenous population and that can endure in Thompson's "Won" phase of counter-insurgency, must be sought.

The second of Thompson's fundamental principles, which is often problematic in terms of balancing the needs of the counter insurgent government against that of its population, refers to legality, or as Thompson says, the government must function in accordance with law. Legality is inextricably connected to legitimacy in terms of societal perception and acceptance of government and military responses to insurgency; they are both key components that must guide counter-insurgency operations. Whilst cultural differences can often impact on the manner in which such operations are conducted, legality from a national and trans national perspective is crucial for both the counter insurgent (soldiers

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<sup>40</sup> Thompson, p51.

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/obamas-iraq-plans-vindicated-as-us-agrees-to-pull-out-by-2011-962874.html> - the announcement by President Obama regarding objectives within Iraq for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, were distinct from his predecessor. It could be interpreted as being more pragmatic, enabling military Force Elements to either return home or deploy to Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (Afghanistan).



and government employees) and the population; protecting both if you will. There are many historical examples of state sponsored coercion (against the population), which are viewed by some as illegal and/or illegitimate activity. Examples of such coercion, including the use of internment in Northern Ireland, and its implications for the population regarding the legality and legitimacy of government policy and existing doctrine, will be discussed in the case studies in Chapter 10.

## Chapter 4 – THE INSURGENTS: WHAT THE OTHER SIDE THINKS AND NEEDS

It is interesting that the new, but as yet unpublished British counter-insurgency doctrine<sup>42</sup> traces its roots back to the 1960s and the seminal works of Robert Thompson; there are but a few minor references to T.E. Lawrence, despite the latter's focus on Insurgency doctrine. In other words, what the other side thought and needed. During 2005, and subsequently during 2007, UK newspapers disparaged U.S. Foreign Policy in Iraq,<sup>43</sup> and in particular, criticised senior US military commanders who referred to anecdotes from T.E. Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom" when commenting upon the insurgency within Iraq. Many of the author's colleagues were quick to join in and emphasised the difference in context; a nomadic rural insurgency as opposed to the urban insurgency in Iraq. Whilst factually correct, they were conceptually wrong and completely missed Lawrence's point. Lawrence was exceptionally prescient in his era; he did not see insurgency tactics as decisive engagements, but rather those of Indirect tactics over a protracted period of time. The insurgents in Iraq used indirect methods throughout 2005 and 2007, and continue to do so; the same is the case within Afghanistan. Lawrence's perspective was also contrary to doctrine of his time, which espoused decisive engagement on a large scale, and was being played out during World War 1 in Europe. As Lawrence stated:

Most wars are wars of contact – our war should be a war of detachment.....the virtue of irregulars lay in depth, not in face and that it had been the threat of attack by them upon the Turkish Northern Flank which had made the enemy hesitate for so long.<sup>44</sup>

By engaging the Turks over a broad front, and using space to the Insurgent's benefit, he sought to force Turkish reinforcement over a larger area, which was unsustainable economically and militarily. Organisationally, it followed that a disparate insurgent force, which had passive support from the population, could better achieve its aim, mitigating the impact of greater Turkish troops, which were tied to static bases, and did not possess the insurgents' freedom of movement. As Lawrence said:

Suppose we were an influence (as we might be), an idea, a thing invulnerable, intangible, without front or back, drifting about like a gas?<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Army Field Manual Volume 1 Part 10.

<sup>43</sup> John Tierney, ""Get out, You Damned One"," *New York Times*, 2 July 2005.

<sup>44</sup> TE Lawrence, "The Evolution of a Revolt," *Army Quarterly and Defence Journal*: pp4, 10.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.: p8.

Such counter-insurgency responses, attritional and direct in nature, were very much in evidence in Afghanistan between 2005 and 2007, with successive UK deployments of the Sixteenth Air Assault, Twelfth Mechanised, and 3rd Commando Brigades, respectively. The respective Brigades were unable to hold ground gained and protect the population, and consistently had to focus upon the insurgent, as opposed to the local population.

As such, one can see that indirectness, asymmetry, the effective use of time with a focus upon the long term, and space, remain key components of insurgency. They offer freedom of action for disparate and small groups of insurgents, who can concentrate as and when required. However, one of the most enlightened observations by Lawrence referred to the importance of publicity and influence, or Influence Operations as we would call it today. He stated that the Printing Press was the greatest weapon in the armoury of the modern commander.<sup>46</sup> The impact of the media today on the battlefield is significant. It transcends national and cultural boundaries; in short, its influence on both the insurgent and his opponent, is profound. It is perhaps in this area where greater focus has been paid by both insurgents and their counterparts, with varying degrees of success.

Within Iraq, Psychological and Information Operations have produced mixed results at best. During June 2005 in Majar Al Khabir in Southern Iraq, the UK Task Force Maysaan<sup>47</sup> conducted a deliberate strike operation designed to capture key insurgent leaders resident within the city; five were successfully interned. However, a key operational effect was the need to influence the population regarding the multinational intent, and to reassure them as to the military presence. Force elements remained on the ground in a non-benign environment in order to distribute leaflets and speak to locals; soldiers were only able to do so for six hours. Unfortunately, most locals could not read, and the Friday prayers at the City Mosque, which followed the operation, rounded on the coalition troops' purported over reaction and kidnapping of "innocent" locals. There was nothing that coalition troops could do; the information operation was effectively lost due to insufficient numbers of soldiers, poor Loiter capability and an inability to limit insurgent information operations.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.: p11.

<sup>47</sup> Task Force Maysaan was based upon the 1 STAFFORDS Infantry Battle Group, of which the author was Second in Command.

Mao Tse Tung wrote ““Yu Chi Chan”: On Guerrilla War” in 1937 having been engaged in a Guerrilla war against the Nationalist Army of Chiang Kai-shek for ten years. It was not until 1949, that the insurgent victory was total. In his youth, Mao had viewed China as semi-colonial and feudal, such were the British, German, French and Russian economic interests and influence.<sup>48</sup> One can therefore see that potentially, there are parallels between Revolutionary China, the causes of other British Colonial insurgencies and the latter’s counter-insurgency doctrine. Mao, who like Lawrence saw the fundamental requirement of popular support, identified seven fundamental steps necessary to the conduct of revolutionary warfare:

Arousing and organising the people,  
Achieving internal unification politically,  
Establishing bases,  
Equipping forces,  
Recovering national strength,  
Destroying enemy’s national strength, and  
Regaining lost territories.<sup>49</sup>

All of his steps can be connected to, or are reliant upon, the population, which remains central to the success of Maoist revolutionary warfare. As Mao said, guerrilla warfare derives from the masses and is supported by them.<sup>50</sup> Unsurprisingly, Mao’s steps mirror the general trend of accepted western counter-insurgency doctrine. In other words, the creation of political unity and belief, and supporting such activity by synchronised and politically subordinated military counter-insurgency operations that protect the population and isolate the insurgents by the denial of vital political/ideological and geographical ground.

Mao views Guerrilla Warfare as:

alertness, mobility and attack....seeming to come from the west, attacking from the East, avoid the solid, and attack the hollow; attack, withdraw.<sup>51</sup>

Mao’s tactics are not dissimilar to Lawrence; indirect and avoiding decisive engagement. However, Mao went further, proposing that there would be a time for decisive engagement, but only when political, social and military conditions guaranteed success; Mao’s first law of warfare, the conservation

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<sup>48</sup> Tse-Tung, p14.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p43.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p44.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p46.

of one's own strength and the destruction of the enemy's, always retained primacy.<sup>52</sup> The insurgents' indirect approach can largely mitigate any disparity in their force levels, by attempting to force counter-insurgency dispositions to be placed over an increasingly broad geographical area to meet geographical threats.

In contrast, up until 2007 in Iraq, coalition force Ways and Means had led to the adoption of direct, albeit attritional, tactics that were focussed pretty much exclusively upon the insurgent, or rather the effect, as opposed to the insurgency's causes. Militarily, the coalition forces in Iraq came close to culmination; soldiers were isolated from the population by the use of large multinational forward operating bases that were outside population centres, and were supported by vulnerable lines of communication. Ironically, soldiers were more focused upon securing their own food supply than defeating insurgency. In this respect General Petraeus' request for additional troops in Iraq, and most likely future requests in Afghanistan by General McChrystal, are understandable counter insurgent responses to insurgents' successful indirect use of space; it is also a harsh criticism of the ignorance of traditional counter insurgent tactics. Possessing a critical mass of military support that can help resolve the cause of an insurgency, which is predominantly political in nature, is key. Such mass must not be focused purely upon the insurgent (the effect), but should seek to protect and support the population's nascent geographically and culturally derived political aspirations (the cause). As Jakub Grygiel<sup>53</sup> stated when referring to the maintenance of Barbarian loyalty to the Roman Empire during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century, one must give them something to lose.<sup>54</sup>

Holding ground, reinforcing indigenous security, and the establishment of governance, which is accompanied by development over a protracted period, is implicit within such a response. It was unachievable in initial phases of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM due to confused political objectives and insufficient military force levels, both of which may have led to an inability to adopt traditional counter-insurgency tactics; both Thompson and Templer advocated the "Hold" phase as a fundamental part of

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p95.

<sup>53</sup> Jakub Grygiel is the George H. W. Bush Assistant Professor of International Relations at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at the Johns Hopkins University, and author of *Great Powers and Geopolitical Change* (2006).

<sup>54</sup> Jakub Grygiel, "Empires and Barbarians", The American Interest Online <http://www.the-american-interest.com/article.cfm?piece=250> (accessed September 19, 2009).

Malaysian counter-insurgency doctrine. Continued failure to do so in Afghanistan will enable insurgents to use time, or rather a longer-term focus, as a means to subsequently reoccupy any ground gained by counter insurgents, and nullify previous counter-insurgent gains. As Brigadier John Lorimer<sup>55</sup> stated when highlighting the inability of coalition soldiers to hold ground after its seizure, and likely taskings to do so again in the future - it was like mowing the grass.<sup>56</sup>

The asymmetrical or rather Maoist parallels in modern insurgencies are evident therein. However, certain Maoist doctrine, which was more brutal, and perhaps more acceptable in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century within a feudal and poor agrarian society in China, is flawed in a modern context. Al Qaeda insurgents miscalculated, or were perhaps unconcerned by a loss of legitimacy through excessive coercion against the local Sunni and Shia population within Baghdad during 2007 and 2008. Al Qaeda's use of indiscriminate violence, coupled with their successful isolation from the population by indigenous Iraqi paramilitary troops, which were backed by coalition soldiers, led to their withdrawal and reduced effectiveness.

That insurgents are not bound by just war principles, can operate outside the law, and thus have greater flexibility, is well known; it cannot however be used as an excuse for a failure to respond to, or pre-empt, any insurgent activity, with the appropriate use of military and civil means. Indeed, the insurgent's *modus operandi* in such cases of brutality must be viewed as an opportunity; an insurgent's critical vulnerability, which if attacked, can lead to his isolation from the population. The isolation of the insurgent from the population is key. However, a careful balance is required when undertaking kinetic counter-insurgency operations; military excesses, and an inappropriate or insensitive operational activity will achieve quite the opposite, thereby aiding the insurgent. A number of examples regarding such excesses, and their implications, are discussed in the Case Studies at Chapters 10 and 11, with particular references to the Bloody Sunday Incident in Northern Ireland and the Baha Mousa Abuse case in Iraq.

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<sup>55</sup> Brigadier John Lorimer DSO MBE – Commander Helmand Task Force/ 12<sup>th</sup> Mechanised Brigade.

<sup>56</sup> Farrell and Gordon, "COIN Machine," *RUSI Journal : Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies* 154, no. 3 (2009): p22.

## PART 2 – EN VOGUE: CURRENT & EMERGING DOCTRINE

### Chapter 5 – JOINT DOCTRINE: RESOURCE OR STRATEGY DEFINED?

The revised Joint Defence Publication - Army Field Manual (AFM) Volume 1 Part 10 - which remains in draft form, is a product of collaborative thought, involving joint military planners and academics from across the United Kingdom. All contributors are viewed as Subject Matter Experts on, Political Science and Military History. The document, which is some 200 pages in length, represents a significant overhaul to its predecessor, although it explicitly traces its genesis to that of Robert Thompson and the Malayan Emergency. Critically, it goes much further, elaborating the complexity of modern insurgencies compared to their colonial or traditional counterparts.

However, there remain gaps in the advice for planners, who need to advise at the operational and tactical level. More worryingly, there are little in the way of operationalised analysis tools, which are fundamental to tactical level commanders; such personnel will be required to operate routinely in a decentralised position of command and exercise military judgement on matters that impact at the operational and strategic level. These issues are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The following diagram from AFM Volume 1 Part 10 highlights the relationship between the military line of operation (security) and all other cross government (inter-agency) stabilisation activities.

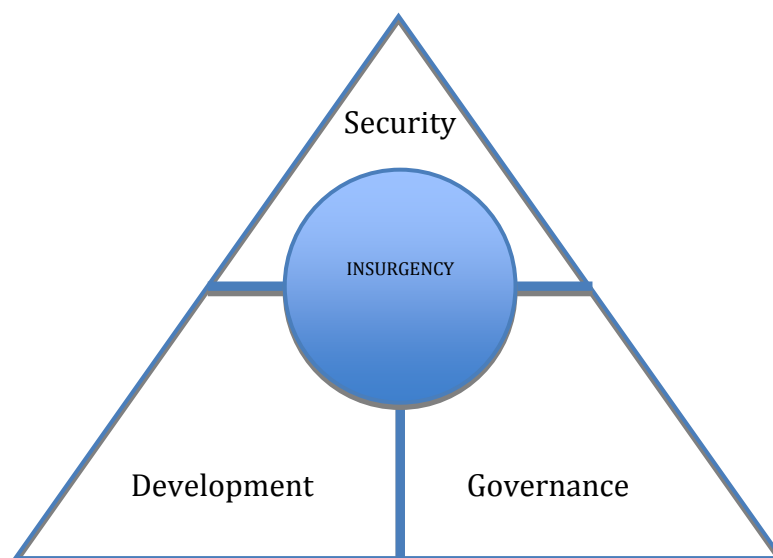


Figure 1: Stabilisation and Counter-Insurgency

Whilst the diagram is useful, it fails to emphasise sufficiently the importance of the Security Line of Operations as an enabler for both Governance and Development. As such, perhaps it is more appropriate that Security encompasses the Insurgency, isolating and reducing its impact - see Figure 2 below. Such a change, however minor, might reassure those responsible for Governance and Development, and when combined with other inter-agency doctrinal and regulatory changes, might contribute to the increased likelihood of coherent joint multi-agency operational activity in non-benign environments. The importance of this reassurance will become evident in the following paragraphs, which reinforce the author's personal experiences whilst deployed in Iraq, along side and more often without, other government department support.

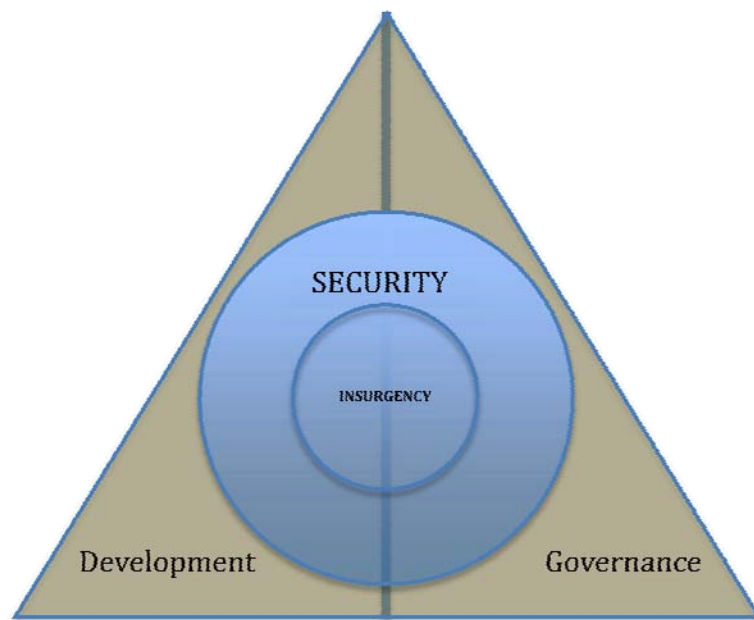


Figure 2: Proposed Stabilisation and Counter-Insurgency Relationship

Figure 2 does more accurately represent the position of Security as an enabler for the conduct of all other non-military Lines of operation, but it does not assist a commander at the tactical level in understanding the need to subordinate military operations to political ends. Indeed, Military Commanders are still using the “Seven Questions Combat Estimate<sup>57</sup>” on current counter-insurgency operations. AFM Volume 1 Part 10 does include an Annex, which reviews its use within a counter-insurgency environment. It appears more suited as a Battle Group / Brigade planning tool, and remains

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<sup>57</sup> The Seven Questions Combat Estimate - A standardised form of British Military analysis, designed for conventional operations, and which assists Commanders in the design of tactical plans, based on enemy dispositions/intent.



predominantly focused in the first place on the Insurgent, and secondly on the implications of insurgency to the population. Again, the emphasis is on the effect of insurgency and not its causes. Moreover, there is no simplistic version of the Seven Questions Analysis that might be more useful to soldiers and officers deploying on military / joint patrols in support of inter-agency lines of operation. The Conventional Seven Questions Combat Estimate is suitable for recognising the subordination of military Ways and Means to political Ends (although this is implicit within Question 2), but as intimated, it remains primarily focused upon the enemy as opposed to the population. It is recognised that the enemy threat must be afforded the appropriate priority, although when designing counter-insurgency operations, even at the tactical level, their impact upon the local population must always be considered; failure to do so will only serve to isolate the population from the military as opposed to the insurgent. Subtle changes to the Estimate process, focusing upon the counter-insurgency requirement, which necessarily retains an enemy focus, but ensures an appropriate subordination to political Ends that affect the population, are detailed below:

<b>Q</b>	<b>Conventional Warfare</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>COIN</b>
<b>(a)</b>	<b>(b)</b>	<b>(c)</b>	<b>(d)</b>
1	What is the Enemy doing and why?	1	What are the local aspirations and political grievances and how is the insurgent exploiting them?
2	What have I been told to do and why?	2	What have I been told to do, Why, and how does it support the political imperative?
3	What effects do I want to have upon the enemy and what direction must I give to develop my plan?	3	What effects do I want to have in order to isolate the insurgent from the local population and what direction must I give to develop the plan?
4	Where can I best achieve each action/effect?	4	Where can I best achieve each action/effect?
5	What resources do I need to accomplish each action/effect?	5	What resources/agency support do I need to accomplish each action/effect and do the actions/effects impact negatively upon the local population?
6	When and where should the action and effects take place in relation to each other?	6	Is the action/effect synchronised with other military or civilian action/effects and/or subordinated to agency action/effects?
7	What control measures do I need to impose?	7	What control measures do I need to impose on military/agency activity or that of the population?

Figure 3 – The Seven Questions Estimate: Conventional & COIN

At the operational level, AFM Volume 1 Part 10 emphasises the use of a “Road Map” in order to assess and re-evaluate campaign design, and any incremental improvements that need to be undertaken both before and during the counter-insurgency operation. This is absolutely critical to ensuring the necessary adjustments to Ends, Ways and Means and in support of the population’s and Host Nation Government’s aspirations. It is detailed below at Figure 4:

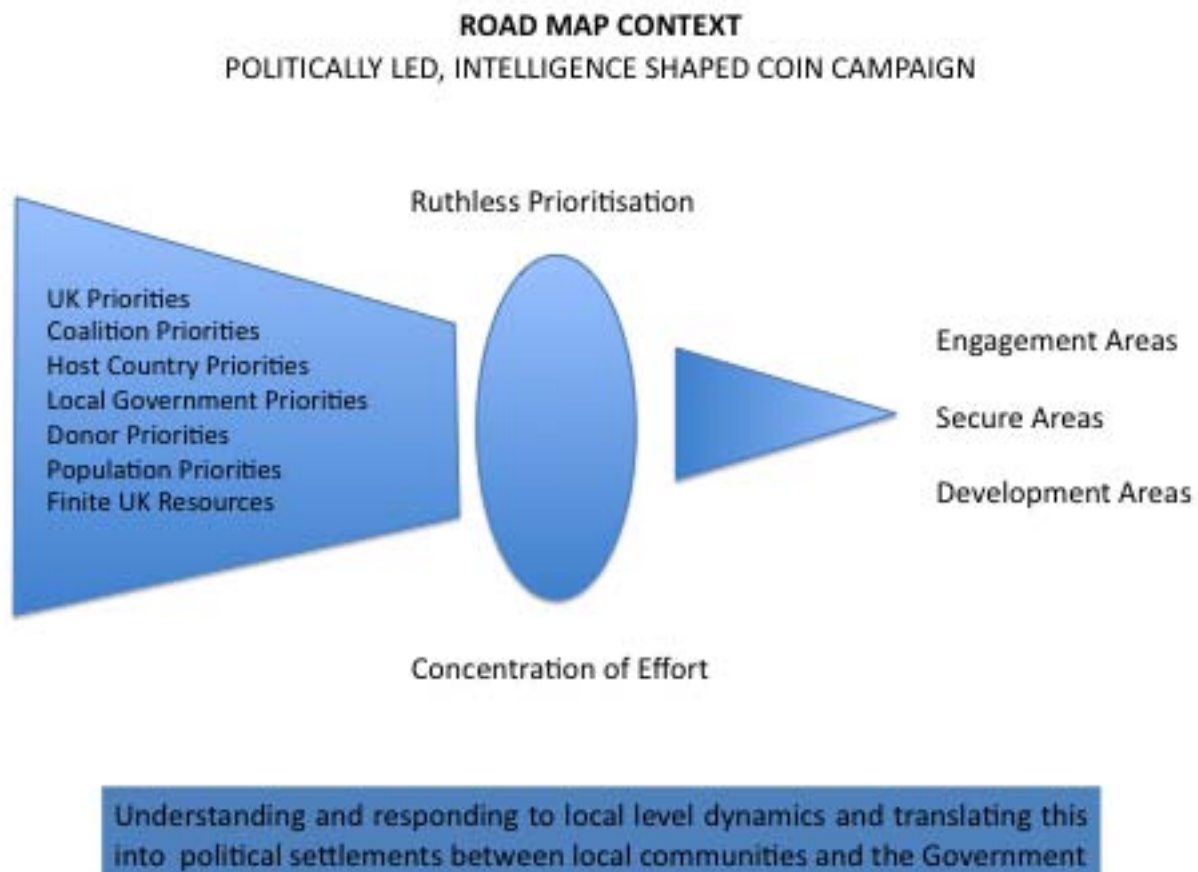


Figure 4 – Draft Road Map Context

Whilst the Figure 4 emphasises the importance of UK, coalition, host country, local, donor and finally population priorities, perhaps in that order of priority, it does infer a lower priority to local population needs and wants, which remain the supposed bedrock of counter-insurgency operations; this runs contrary to both Thompson’s and core British counter-insurgency doctrine. It might perhaps be more appropriate for the following diagrammatic representation of such a road map to be used, emphasising the changeable nature of the Ends, Ways and Means and according the necessary priority to the population. In doing so, there is an increased likelihood of long-term success, through a clearer

articulation of risks and their impact and probability. It is also responsive to change given the feedback loop, which assesses progress against intermediate objectives as well as Campaign or Political Ends.

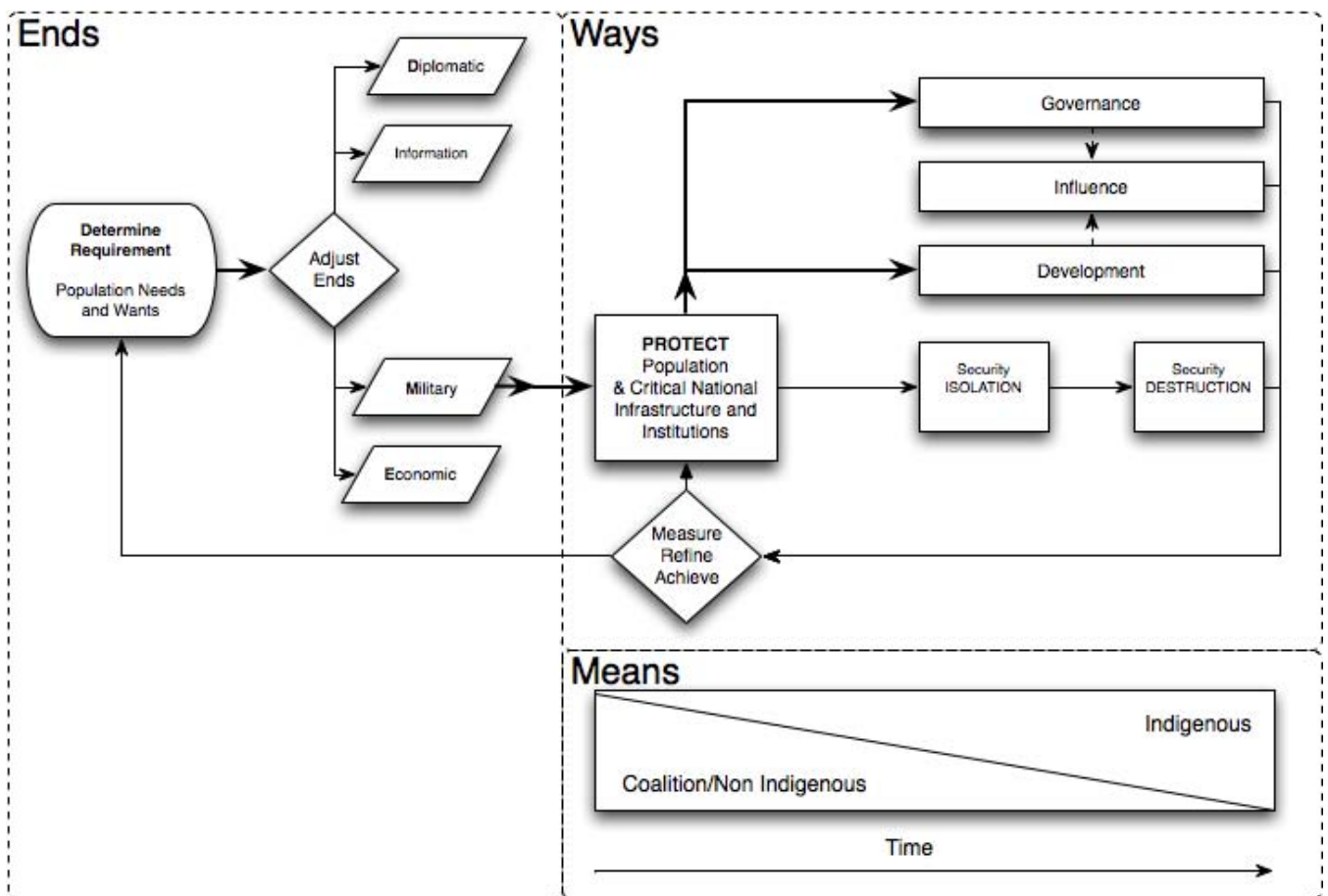


Figure 5

Figure 5 emphasises the following:

- An appropriate determination of the population's requirement (Cause) and with it the insurgent aspirations and means of leverage (Effect). It is not enemy focused, although clearly such issues will be considered when deciding Ways and Means of achieving political Ends in support of the population's needs and wants.
- The accurate determination of the population and therefore governmental requirement (perhaps the latter's Centre of Gravity or one of its Critical Vulnerabilities) would refine initial Strategic or Operational Ends ensuring cultural relevance, which is increasingly important in those counter insurgencies affected by significant theological/religious factors. As a result it would be easier to identify any politically uncomfortable

compromises<sup>58</sup>, the impact of which might undermine the very pillars of justification for “western liberal democratic” sponsored expeditionary counter-insurgency operations.

- Protecting the population and critical national institutions/infrastructure (which is necessarily resource intensive) is fundamental as an enabler for the population, host nation governmental reassurance and critically, interagency/ non-governmental organisational support to the non-military decisive lines of operation.
- Governance and Development lines of operation must take place concurrently with the isolation and destruction of insurgents, all of which influence the population’s hearts and minds.
- The Progress of all lines of operation must be measured on a regular basis, thereby affecting changes to future counter insurgent activities, which are continually refined by population and host nation aspirations. Such incremental and refined changes will ensure a smoother progression to the desired end state, which supports the population and is more likely to provide a long-term solution.

Both Diagrams 2 and 5 highlight the importance of security. It should be noted that security is not just applicable to the population – it is also equally imperative for inter-agency personnel and government departments, who are hamstrung by overly restrictive risk mitigation plans that inhibit their support in all but the most benign environment. Whilst one cannot be blasé, or cavalier about the importance of security, its perception is just as important as the reality, and applies as much to the periods prior to commencement of counter-insurgency operations (planning) as it does during. The reality of government departments, which work to distinct agendas or divergent objectives, and that possess differing appetites for personnel risks, is both commonplace and disruptive, affecting negatively any attempts to undertake holistic counter-insurgency operations. One could argue that if the Ministry of Defence wishes to see greater involvement of inter-agency personnel, direct or indirect, more effort ought to be made in explicitly recognising the overarching importance of security as an enabler for all lines of operation – internal information operations would undoubtedly assist.

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<sup>58</sup> See Page 2-4, Footnote 11 for likely compromises.

Traditionally, counter-insurgency doctrine has focussed on the long-term security of nation states affected by insurgency, by ensuring effective governance: western liberal democratic governance. This remains a worthy aspiration and is emphasised within AFM Volume 1 Part 10, although it may not be achievable. Internal (at home) and external (within the theatre of operation) pressure, caused by mounting casualties and negative press reporting, appear to be forcing political changes to longer-term strategic counter-insurgency objectives. The Afghanistan and Iraq counter insurgencies have highlighted significant cultural and socio political differences between counter insurgents and the population that they protect - such differences can be subtly distinct, or even diametrically opposed. Quite simply, 'Jeffersonian' democratic principles are not comfortably received within a tribal, theologically and ethnically complex, and at times feudal society such as Afghanistan or even parts of Iraq. One size does not fit all for the affected population. Equally, nor does the insurgent population's objection to these ends fit all in relation to the troop contributing nation's electorate. The dichotomy therein presents a real challenge for policy and strategic planners.

As such, in the future, Political objectives are likely to be necessarily curtailed in certain environments; this will be problematic for counter-insurgent governments/troop contributing nations that have used democracy, as justification for interventionism. Such challenges are leading to a potentially uncomfortable paradigm shift in counter-insurgency, and its political imperatives; as previously mentioned, the aim is less likely to be the need to win the war, rather it will be not to lose. Moreover, counter-insurgency political Ends, will have to be more culturally sensitive, even if uncomfortable/ for counter insurgent governments engaged in expeditionary counter-insurgency operations. This challenge should be reflected in British Doctrine and must be recognised by Government.

AFM Volume 1 Part 10 is a thorough document, encapsulating the key counter-insurgency lessons learnt over the last sixty years. It endeavours to emphasise the importance of a long-term focus, political primacy and military subordination, and the requirement for significant resources. This latter point is key, and has been reinforced by recent U.S. experiences in Iraq, which confirmed the need for a significant military augmentation *ab initio* in order to deliver security at the tactical level, itself an

enabler for other lines of operation.<sup>59</sup> Paradoxically, implicit to the document's section outlining planning considerations, which focus upon Operational level approaches that are applicable at the Tactical level, is an acceptance of the paucity of resources:

Commanders will be constrained by a paucity of means to achieve ends.....a commander should not limit his ambition to acquiring the "Means" required to achieve the "Ends"....obtaining equipment through urgent Operational Requirements.....and use initiative to fill gaps.<sup>60</sup>

Whilst it is perhaps pragmatic to expect shortcomings, one could argue that it accepts them, thereby promoting the likelihood of creating conditions for more limited military objectives and by definition political/inter-agency ends. This is quite the opposite to the accepted and proven approach to counter-insurgency; as Dr. Paul Melshen of the Joint Forces Staff College (JFSC) stated when referring to the need for military mass in counter-insurgency operations, go in big, early.<sup>61</sup> Trading time and space for a lack of resources will only go so far to mitigate insufficient means; if such shortcomings are apparent at the tactical level, operational and strategic risk appetites must be confirmed. Crucially, such shortages reduce the ability of counter insurgents to "hold" population centres, having "cleared" them previously; the very problem that the UK's 12<sup>th</sup> Mechanised Brigade faced in Helmand Province during 2007. Such a trade is by definition short term, is less decisive, and is unlikely to create sufficient security that can both reassure the population and/or enable inter-agency personnel to undertake governance and development lines of operation. Moreover, it is absolutely contrary to Thompson's doctrine, and does not reflect the Means available to him during the Malayan Emergency. This latter point will be examined in more detail in Chapter 8.

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<sup>59</sup> Mike Jackson, "British Counter-Insurgency," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. no. 3 (2009): p348.

<sup>60</sup> Joint Doctrine Centre, Chapter 7, p7-5.

<sup>61</sup> Dr Paul Melshen, *Low Intensity Conflict/Old War/New War/Counter Insurgency Theory- Elective Lesson 2* (Norfolk: Joint Advanced Warfighting School, National Defence University, September 30, 2009).

## Chapter 6 - THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH: NOT A SILVER BULLET

The Comprehensive Approach (CA), to which many Other Government Departments now refer, is a Joint Discussion Note originally published in January 2006. It is a pragmatic attempt to overcome many of the shortcomings that were apparent in the post conflict operations conducted in Iraq. The document was designed to codify emerging best practice whilst providing initial guidance to the MOD and other government departments (agencies). It was also intended to inform and support development of the CA across Whitehall.<sup>62</sup> It recognised that its true benefits, the most important of which are outlined in the following paragraphs, could only be realised if absorbed within the culture of individual government departments.<sup>63</sup> Such a change in culture within other government departments is key, but must be supported by amendments to their doctrine and the joint inter-agency mechanisms at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. These mechanisms, or their absences in some cases will be studied in more detail in the following paragraphs. The Comprehensive Approach is defined as:

....a way of thinking and specific processes that, together, enable the integration and effectiveness of the military contribution within a Comprehensive Approach.<sup>64</sup>

The following paragraphs outline key tenets.

The Joint Discussion Note reiterates existing early warning systems for the coordination of ministerial level activity, in particular the Cabinet Office Briefing (COBR<sup>65</sup>) mechanism and focuses upon a cross government approach to UK operations. The focus of this approach is to stimulate debate and improve inter governmental department (Agency) communications. The document represents no significant departure to how counter-insurgency operations have traditionally been conducted. Critically, the document is a discussion note, and whilst the inherent terminology has been adopted across other agencies, much of the their organisational inertia and foci, remain. Working Groups are improving communications, but there remains no formal mechanism for tasking, coordination and the allocation of responsibilities; this is particularly the case for non-military lead agency requirements and responsibilities. The provision of such specific responsibilities or mechanisms, are not elaborated within

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<sup>62</sup> Director General Joint Doctrine and Concepts. piii.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p1-8.

<sup>65</sup> Cabinet Office Briefing (COBR) – COBR is the UK Government mechanism/organisation, which is activated in the case of national or regional crises, at home or abroad with major political/ national implications.

the Discussion Note. Although it infers greater collaboration, with an emphasis upon pre conflict resolution/counter-insurgency operations, no mention is made of primacy and joint responsibilities during an operation. The physical manifestation of such shortcomings is simple: no effective joint inter-agency operational activity. It is these shortcomings that appear to have led to the recent resignation of Major General Andrew Mackay, formerly Commander of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade, which deployed to Afghanistan during 2007. He recently commented that although the army was supposed to be there [in Afghanistan] to support agencies such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in practice “the military were doing the vast majority of the delivery,” there was not initially “a plan worthy of its name,” and that development projects implemented so far amounted only to a “flea bite.”<sup>66</sup> A number of distinct options, one of which has recently been attempted within Afghanistan, and that should restore civil primacy to counter-insurgency operations, will be discussed subsequently in order to identify appropriate structures and doctrine for future counter-insurgency operations.

The Joint Discussion Note is explicit in requiring a shared understanding<sup>67</sup> of mutual challenges. In particular, it stipulates that a broader pool of knowledge from disparate agencies should provide depth and resilience, and that improved planning and execution<sup>68</sup> is fundamental to the successful use of the Comprehensive Approach. It is absolutely right that agencies ought wherever possible to use common terminology, but inter-agency doctrine, and formalised procedures and mechanisms, ought to exist prior to conflict resolution or involvement in counter-insurgency operations; at present they do not. This will be examined in more detail in Chapter 7.

Collaborative working is viewed as a tool to facilitate improved shared understanding.<sup>69</sup> In particular, the authors of the Joint Discussion Note state that:

Institutional familiarity, trust and transparency must exist between government departments.....and more sophisticated and integrated Information Management techniques, infrastructure and connectivity would play a central role in enabling advanced working practices.<sup>70</sup>

There can be no arguments regarding the clear intent, but history has proved on many occasions that

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article6850938.ece>.

<sup>67</sup> Director General Joint Doctrine and Concepts. p1-6.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p1-7.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.



Information Technology (IT) is not a panacea; far from providing solutions, it can often cause problems in themselves. Moreover, there is no money available within the MOD for further procurement of IT resources.<sup>71</sup> Such collaborative working can only be achieved by the creation of a true inter-agency organisation in support of counter-insurgency operations; an example of such an organisation in Afghanistan is outlined in the next chapter. It exists more by good fortune than by the provision of existing doctrine.

Robert Egnell identifies the British Approach to Civil Military relationships as being one that muddles along.<sup>72</sup> In particular, he identifies a flexible approach,<sup>73</sup> one that is adaptive to differing circumstances, and that is inculcated throughout the military chain of command. Such a muddled approach is often very evident within Whitehall, and reflects the language used within the Joint Discussion Note, which seeks collaborative endeavours and improved communications. In fairness, the Joint Discussion Note does recognise this, and endeavours to focus joint and inter-agency planning and preparation by the use of “Outcome-based thinking.” This is most likely a pragmatic means to seek greater unity of command or thinking in a complex multi-agency environment, with potentially divergent aims and objectives. Whilst an improvement on the status quo ante in terms of unifying inter-agency terminology and perhaps methods of problem solving in support of Government Strategy, it remains “toothless” if not applied across both the Department for International Development, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry Of Defence (MOD), and supported by inter-agency (non MOD) doctrine. It is the latter point that remains enigmatic, and lacking. John Nagl also highlights that the British Army has traditionally adopted an informal and innovative approach to counter-insurgency and that separate doctrine and policy is needed;<sup>74</sup> he is right, but only partially. It is self evident that policy and strategy will vary, catering for distinct political ends, and respecting the affected populations’ aspirations. However, doctrine will not necessarily need to be different for each counter-insurgency, rather, the specific plan, joint and inter-agency, must reflect the specific geo-

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<sup>71</sup> Interview with SO1 G6 Communications, HQ 4<sup>th</sup> Division, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2009 – A military staff officer who is responsible to General Officer Commanding 4<sup>th</sup> Division for the delivery of all CIS systems for military units in the south of England.

<sup>72</sup> Robert Egnell, "Explaining USA and British Performance in Complex Expeditionary Operations: The Civil-Military Dimension," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* Vol. 29, no. No. 6 (2006): p1066.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.: p1067.

<sup>74</sup> John A. Nagl, *Counter Insurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam: Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (Westport: Praeger, 2002), pp105, 196, 197, 216.

political factors prevalent to the insurgency.

The requirement to pursue an effective and timely response to both emerging and enduring insurgency operations is well recognised within the Joint Discussion Note. Particular reference is made to the requirement for a Lead Framework Authority, such as an International Organisation, during Coalition Operations. However, post conflict operations such as Iraq saw the granting of “Occupying Powers” across provinces. In such circumstances, there are often significant conflicts of interest, which could potentially clash with either national interests or legal requirements. Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, which is subsequently analysed in Chapter 11, offers an excellent insight into the nature of the challenges, which remain unresolved within current British counter-insurgency doctrine, particularly connected to coalition operations.

One must remember that the Joint Discussion Note was not authoritative in its own right; it was guidance, seeking approval, and cross government enculturation of its enshrined principles, most of which do not differ greatly to those espoused by Robert Thompson. In short, it is a sound foundation, but must be followed up by inter-agency doctrine, using agreed common terminology, and supported by mechanisms and infrastructure.

The challenge for the Comprehensive Approach, lies in its status as a Discussion Note; it is toothless. That said, much of the language contained therein is now used more widely across other Government Organisations/ Agencies. It is critical that any Ministry of Defence suggestions remain sensitive to Other Government Department methods and needs; this is emphasised for good reason within the Note. When combined with effective communication and a common understanding of roles, and more importantly responsibilities, real inter-agency synchronisation could occur. In doing so, express reference to civil primacy, and military supporting activities has to be emphasised. This represents a Governmental task, not one promoted/sponsored by the Ministry of Defence, which is after all an enabling element.

## Chapter 7 - INTER-AGENCY PERSPECTIVES: PLATITUDES IN PROGRESS

During 1997, and following a Prime Ministerial initiative to bring greater coherence to inter-agency policy, planning and implementation, the Department for International Development (DfID) was created. Whilst many critics viewed the department as unnecessary, replicating that which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) had traditionally undertaken, DfID was nonetheless tasked with tackling a specific element of traditional FCO policy – that of world poverty. In particular, it was designed to make sure that every pound of British aid works its hardest to help the poor.<sup>75</sup>

Organisationally, DfID grew very quickly, focused primarily upon poverty reduction.

The Secretary of State, The Right Honourable Clare Short MP, led DfID.<sup>76</sup> The Department recruited rapidly from a predominantly non-governmental organisation manning pool, the majority of which was against rapid or aggressive military interventionism. By 2002, DfID's stance was such that it had largely withdrawn from planning for the invasion of Iraq,<sup>77</sup> and its involvement in the following years was intermittent to say the least.

Furthermore, Theo Farrell and Stuart Gordon argue that the challenges that DfID faced were far more problematic. They infer that the Department's focus on achievement of the UN Millennium goals and poverty reduction often ran contrary to the UK's national interests.<sup>78</sup> Their observations are reinforced by the findings of a Comprehensive Review undertaken in July 2004 by the Assistant Chief of the General Staff, Major General WR Rollo.<sup>79</sup> The Review analysed post conflict operations in Iraq, and although focused from a Land Component perspective, it looked at the tactical, operational and to a lesser extent strategic level. Critically, it analysed the operational level interaction between The Ministry of Defence and Other Government Departments (OGD). The review highlighted that whilst Operational Security had limited initial cross governmental involvement in planning, even once engaged, differing governmental department perspectives became apparent during the very limited joint

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<sup>75</sup> <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/About-DFID/Quick-guide-to-DFID/Who-we-are-and-what-we-do/>.

<sup>76</sup> The Honourable Clare Short MP resigned as Secretary of State for DfID in May 2003 following her continued disagreements regarding both the initial justification and subsequent conduct of the Iraq war and counter-insurgency campaign - [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/politics/3019983.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/3019983.stm).

<sup>77</sup> Gordon: p24.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.: pp23, 24.

<sup>79</sup> Prepared under the direction of the Chief of the General Staff, *Operations in Iraq - an Analysis from the Land Perspective* 2004. Army Code 71816.

inter-agency planning for post conflict operations.

However, of late, it appears that progress has been made, or rather counter-insurgency lessons have finally been re-learnt regarding military subordination and civil primacy within Afghanistan. In 2008, Headquarters Helmand Task Force (Military Component) and the Provincial Reconstruction Team<sup>80</sup> (Civil/Political component) merged to form a combined Civil Military Mission in Helmand (CMMH); critically, a Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2 Star Officer led it. In other words, eight years after deployment, the British had finally re-established civil primacy in its counter-insurgency campaign. The CMMH bears many similarities to that which Templer had used previously in Malaya, although Templer was both High Commissioner and Director of Military Operations.

Whilst the delayed implementation of the CMMH hints at a prior lack of civil primacy or ineffective coordination of civil/military lines of operation, there is a more worrying delta concerning related joint inter-agency doctrine. The fault for the perpetuation of such a lack of primacy does in part rest with the military component, with many viewing DfID activities as those that can backfill, support and improve military operations themselves.<sup>81</sup> This is quite the opposite to established and previously practiced counter-insurgency doctrinal norms, which understandably lead to the isolation of civil enablers. However, the major shortcoming lies in the lack of formal joint inter-agency doctrine for the automatic creation of such a coordinating body, which can subordinate military ways and means to civil/political ends. This represents a significant gap in both joint and inter-agency doctrine that must be more clearly articulated at the outset, forming part of the campaign design and its supporting organisational architecture.

It makes sense that once warned for potential counter-insurgency operations, or during transition from conflict to post conflict operations, that a mechanism, perhaps within either the Joint Force Headquarters or the deployable military component Headquarters, is established to appoint an FCO/DfID lead officer of equal or senior rank to the in-theatre military commander. The FCO/DfID officer, with supporting staff (from the Conflict Stabilisation Unit) could therefore ensure a more effective coordination of civil / military lines of operation and more importantly, that the military line of

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<sup>80</sup> DfID provided a major proportion of manpower to the Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

<sup>81</sup> Gordon: p24.

operation is slaved to its civil counterpart.

In 2004, the UK Government created the Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU); it was renamed the Conflict Stabilisation Unit (CSU) in late 2007 to better reflect the nature of its role in supporting the management of the Ministry of Defence's £269 million Stabilisation Aid Fund. The CSU is a UK Government inter-Departmental unit designed to improve the UK's ability to support countries emerging from violent conflict. It is jointly owned by the DfID, the FCO and the Ministry of Defence – its three parent departments. The CSU has personnel deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and within the Permanent Joint Headquarters. That DfID undoubtedly works to detailed regional and country specific plans, is incontrovertible.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, it has created a UK Guide to Stabilisation, which encapsulates its lessons learnt from Afghanistan.<sup>83</sup> What remains less clear is if this doctrine is sufficient to guide and coordinate joint inter-agency counter-insurgency operations, or “stabilisation” as referred to by DfID.

The UK Approach to Stabilisation Guide, like AFM Volume 1 Part 10, remains in draft form. It is an essentially pragmatic document, reflecting the many challenges that DfID faces in delivering Stabilisation operations. Such pragmatism is evident in the department's observations regarding keys to success, such as:

Good enough strategies, policies and plans...aim for what is required and adequate rather than ideal and complete.<sup>84</sup>

This is perhaps, the first formal, albeit internal, Governmental recognition of a counter-insurgency strategy focused upon not losing.

However, the document is no panacea for joint inter-agency operations; indeed, it is quite explicit, stating that there is currently no other single document, which sets out in clear terms for UK participants, what is meant by stabilisation and what it involves.<sup>85</sup> Nowhere within the document is there any reference to the DfID or the FCO assuming overall responsibility for such stabilisation operations. Political primacy is referred to within the planning stages of campaign design, but there is

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<sup>82</sup> <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/Afghanistan-Country-Plan-2009.pdf>.

<sup>83</sup> Department for International Development, *The UK Approach to Stabilisation* 2009.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p12.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p11.

no explicit reference to it during the implementation/delivery phase. Until there is formal recognition across all Government Departments (also reflected in their organisational manning and doctrine) that counter-insurgency is not a purely military operation, and that strategic design and implementation are a civil responsibility with military support as an enabler, disjointed and incoherent counter-insurgency operations will continue.

The following extract highlights the background to the doctrine's evolution, and refers to one of the major unresolved challenges to current counter-insurgency operations; the lack of any joint solution to mitigate the inability of inter-agency personnel to conduct stabilisation activity in non-benign environments:

This agenda originates in the debate over task leadership in stabilisation and particularly what the military should prepare for and undertake in 'non-permissive' environments – a question brought to the fore in Iraq and Afghanistan. What is presented here is a 'menu' of possibilities, elements of which may be relevant in planning and implementation in different stabilisation environments.<sup>86</sup>

In short, there must be a greater willingness on the part of the DfID and the FCO to work within non-benign environments if even limited success is desired in expeditionary counter-insurgency operations; greater risk must be accepted. The British Army is neither trained, equipped nor manned for such activities, and any additional training, particularly related to those activities that ought to be undertaken by inter-agency personnel, will only serve to impact upon both the likely success of the counter-insurgency, and more worryingly upon the British Army's Large Scale Deliberate Intervention (LSDI) capability. As the newly appointed Chief of the General Staff said in the Annual Defence Lecture to the Chatham House Think Tank on 17 September 2009:

We have to find the courage to accept risk in the way we prepare for future conflict for one obvious reason: it is simply not affordable to do otherwise.<sup>87</sup>

His comment is as relevant to all Government agencies as it is to the British Army when referring to future conflict, and in particular counter-insurgency.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p2.

<sup>87</sup> Chief of the General Staff General Sir David Richards, "Future War, 2009 Annual Defence Lecture, London.

## PART 3 – AN IMPERIAL STAFF RIDE

### Chapter 8 – MALAYA: CHINESE WHISPERS?

Malaya achieved independence from the British Empire on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1957. Malaya's connections to England span a much greater period of time; Malaya has been prominent in British Imperial history in the Far East since 1765.<sup>88</sup> The country was of strategic importance for a number of reasons, firstly its position as the Eastern Littoral Shore of the South China Sea, and secondly as the gateway to India. Of equal importance, by 1930, Malaya was economically buoyant, exporting a quarter of a million tons of rubber, half a million gallons of latex and eighty thousand tons of tin and ore, per annum.<sup>89</sup> Such natural resources were fundamental to Japanese Second World War strategic success. The social, economic and political impact of Japanese occupation between December 1941 and August 1945 was central in setting many of the conditions for the Malayan Emergency and its communist roots. Communist expansion continued after cessation of hostilities, and following the Communist Youth Conference in Calcutta during February 1948, at which central communist direction was received from Moscow, the Malayan Communist Party went on the offensive. The insurrection was of sufficient gravity for the Federal Government to invoke Emergency Powers, which required Military Aid to the Civil Powers in order to restore law and order.

Up until 1950, the Malayan Emergency and its predominantly military/internal security response was controlled by the Commissioner of Police. Unfortunately, he possessed insufficient delegated powers/authority<sup>90</sup> to coordinate what would today be called joint inter-agency operations.

The initiative lay with the communists for two years....Army and Police activity was focussed solely upon outbreaks of insurrection as they occurred.....the civil administration necessary to follow it up was inadequate.<sup>91</sup>

In fact, joint inter-agency doctrine did not yet exist; such a paradigm shift, with an emphasis on political primacy, would not really take place until the arrival of General Sir Gerald Templer. Initially however, Lieutenant General (Retired) Harold Briggs was appointed as Director of Operations on behalf of High

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<sup>88</sup> Although a charter between HM Queen Elizabeth 1<sup>st</sup> and the Sultan of Kedah had existed from 31<sup>st</sup> December 1591, there was a much closer relation, linked to trade and military treaties between 1765 and 1800.

<sup>89</sup> Robert Jackson, *The Malayan Emergency and Indonesian Confrontation* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military, 1991; reprint, 2008), p6.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p19.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., pp21, 22.

Commissioner. He was granted Emergency Powers, devised what became known as the Briggs Plan, and completely changed the focus of the campaign: from reactive policing to physical separation of the insurgent from the population by a system of population resettlement.<sup>92</sup> Such separation was supported by the conduct of intelligence driven offensive operations including “terrorist food denial” operations and long term anti-terrorist patrolling designed to isolate and destroy communist insurgents. Whilst the Briggs Plan was joint from its inception, it would be inaccurate to say that it was inter-agency by design or practice, or that military subordination to political Ends was explicitly recognised; Briggs’ *modus operandi*, whilst a significant advance upon that which it had preceded, remained predominantly military in nature – such an approach would always have its limitations. As Robert Thompson stated:

Even if an armed insurgency is defeated, the political and subversive struggle will go on and can still win.<sup>93</sup>

Paradoxically, it was the effect of the war upon the British Empire, its diminishing global influence, and the availability of resources that led to the promise of independence. This single act, which was one of political and fiscal necessity, undermined one of the key communist criticisms of a prolonged imperial presence. It was a clear political objective / solution from the outset of the campaign, and more importantly, it was what the population wanted; it gave them a stake in the future of their country - something to lose. Although the promise was not a direct result of the counter-insurgency Campaign Design, the End State, or rather political ends that would unify all other ways and means were present from the campaign’s inception, although this may not necessarily have been recognised at the time as such.

Although component parts of the Briggs Plan were to remain throughout the Emergency, it was not until the appointment of General Sir Gerald Templer as both High Commissioner and Director of Military Operations that a more holistic campaign approach could be adopted. The Malayan population remained at the core of the counter-insurgency civil/military operations. The development of an indigenous and stable political and security infrastructure ensured acceptable local security and increased indigenous acceptance of responsibility. The provision of security was enabled by a

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<sup>92</sup> Lieutenant General Sir Harold Briggs, *General Briggs' Plan for the Elimination of Communists in Malaya*, 1950.

<sup>93</sup> Thompson, p47.



significant quantity of both British Armed Forces and indigenous security force personnel. Templer employed Sir Arthur Young to re-design the indigenous Malayan Police Force.<sup>94</sup> Young's work, called Operation SERVICE was instrumental in ensuring that the population gained trust in the Police Force. His reforms ensured that the police were viewed as helpers/friends, and not oppressors;<sup>95</sup> they built trust, reinforced the perception of normality, and in doing so further isolated the insurgents.

One can see the importance of the growth of local security, which itself can enable the development of governance in a safe environment. However, one cannot overlook such circumstances in Malaya without reviewing security force dispositions to assess the importance of “mass” in achieving security. The number of military personnel deployed in Malaya is often overlooked as one of the contributory factors for operational success. Whilst the resettlement of local farmers and their families contributed to the isolation of the insurgent from the population, military personnel involved in the Malayan Emergency did not have to “trade time for space” to make up for insufficient resources, as do their modern counterparts. The contrast is all the more stark when one compares the number of British soldiers deployed in Southern Iraq during 2006/7 at the height of the insurgency.<sup>96</sup>

Table 1

<b>MALAYAN EMERGENCY – SECURITY FORCE DISPOSITIONS<sup>97</sup></b>			
<b>Indigenous</b>		<b>British and Commonwealth</b>	
<b>Type</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
Regular /Federal Police - by 1953	36, 737	British & Commonwealth Armed Forces Personnel (23 Infantry Battalions)	30, 000
Malay Special Constabulary	44, 878		
Kampong Guards / Auxiliary Police/Civil Defence Force	300,000		
<b>Total (Separate Indigenous &amp; Non Indigenous)</b>	<b>381, 615</b>		<b>30, 000</b>
<b>Joint Total</b>	<b>411, 615<sup>98</sup></b>		

Indigenous forces gradually assumed greater responsibility and with some real successes. Such success stemmed from Templer's acceptance of significant operational risk regarding access to sensitive

<sup>94</sup> Sir Arthur Young was the former Commissioner of City of London Police, and Commissioner of Police in Malaya during 1952/53. Subsequently, he was also involved in policing reforms in Kenya during the Mau Mau Uprising.

<sup>95</sup> Jackson, *The Malayan Emergency and Indonesian Confrontation*, p25.

<sup>96</sup> Since the conduct of Operation TELIC 2 (commencement of post conflict stabilization operations), British Force levels have remained at approximately 5000 personnel. This represents a composite Brigade with a British lead element of a multinational Divisional Headquarters -

<http://www.mod.uk/defenceinternet/defencenews/defencepolicyandbusiness/4mechanisedbrigadetotakeoverastheleadformationinsoutherniraq.htm>.

<sup>97</sup> Jackson, *The Malayan Emergency and Indonesian Confrontation*, pp17, 18.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

intelligence for indigenous troops, and much greater subordination of military ways and means to political ends. Admittedly, Templer was granted significant freedom of action, and was not overly affected by interference from Whitehall, which is in direct contrast to his modern day contemporary; when combined with sufficient numbers of personnel, greater gains were made and/or consolidated. In short, Mass matters; it is critical to early stabilisation activities, and ensures that the population has greater confidence and trust in the counter insurgent policy ends, ways and means and facilitates non-military inter-agency activity. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff recognised its importance at the beginning of the Emergency:

...the solution will require a thorough reorganisation of internal security forces, establishment of a Home Guard, reinforcements, reorganisation of the police and in addition, the deployment of three to four Divisions.<sup>99</sup>

Recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have pointed to the implications of failure to ensure sufficient stability/security. In particular, non-military activity within a non-benign environment remains a significant challenge; as previously outlined, in some cases, in Iraq for example, civil agencies either could not or would not operate under such conditions. On 6<sup>th</sup> October 1951, the British High Commissioner to Malaya, Sir Henry Gurney, was ambushed and killed sixty-five miles north of Kuala Lumpur. There was significant outcry in the United Kingdom, and the incident was recognised by many as the low point in the campaign.<sup>100</sup> It is unlikely that non-military personnel, in particular civil servants would be able to operate in such a non-benign environment today. Indeed, there are a number of noteworthy factors that enabled such non-military support during the Emergency:

- A significant amount of residual “UK National” Foreign Service/Colonial Office personnel remained throughout countries that were formerly part of the British Empire. Such personnel were often permanent/long term residents and as such were highly committed to success for personal as much as professional reasons, particularly if married to locals.
- The Imperial policy of employing indigenous personnel within local governments was used extensively in Malaya. This increased local and regional ownership of issues, whilst maintaining a clear understanding of policy implications, both positive and negative. Moreover, the “risk” to

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<sup>99</sup> Nagl, p65.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p75.

such personnel was relative to their own local norms and values. One could argue that this would increase the risk threshold. If one was perhaps rather more clinical, the risk was born by the local employee, and not the UK government.

Such benefits, or rather hangovers from the Colonial Period, no longer exist. However, the use of indigenous personnel to undertake governance and development in both Afghanistan and Iraq has remained central to existing counter-insurgency policy. This has had to be undertaken progressively, and has been affected significantly by the security environment. In light of the impact of such security risks, there remain a number of distinct counter-insurgency policy options, which will drive doctrine and strategy: accept greater risk (both local physical and national political in nature) and employ non indigenous and local civilian/governmental personnel earlier, all of whom are supported by soldiers providing security; sequence non indigenous and local civilian/governmental activity to follow the establishment of security; or train the military to undertake the civilian task. It is unlikely that a modern liberal democracy would tolerate the acceptance of greater risk with international/strategic implications, particularly if it impacts upon civilians as opposed to soldiers. Equally, the conduct of phased or sequenced non-military operations after the establishment of a secure environment would delay achievement of political objectives thereby potentially aggravating the local population and in doing so isolating them from the counter insurgents. Finally, whilst the British Army could undertake many of the simple non-military tasks, it is neither trained nor equipped for such a role. There is no simple solution to this dilemma, which was not as apparent in Malaya. It is most likely that the Military component will have to undertake the aforementioned civilian roles, either in part or full. Without additional military training and resources, such activities will inevitably be compromises and take longer to complete.

This friction highlights the need for government policy that will drive the joint inter-agency strategy and affect tactics, techniques and procedures. Such a significant policy delta, with resource implications, must be resolved by the UK government, which can then be reflected in joint / inter-agency counter-insurgency doctrine.

Legitimacy within counter-insurgencies is key for both the insurgent and the counter insurgent. Achievement of legitimacy is made easier by possessing a greater understanding of the population affected by the insurgency. General Sir Mike Jackson identifies the real challenge regarding legitimacy in the modern complex counter-insurgency environment as being that of ensuring the rule of law, where it has not been.<sup>101</sup> He also identifies the requirement to strike an appropriate balance in the use of force or more draconian ways and means of supporting political ends - if one is too timid you will be seen as faint hearted, and if too harsh, just that.<sup>102</sup> There can be no doubt that more draconian measures<sup>103</sup> were adopted during the Malayan Emergency than might perhaps be used today. Critically, such an approach, which was more aggressively coercive, was acceptable at that time, and arguably within the popular cultural norms. The challenge that is faced nowadays with 24/7 media communications, much of which is often intrusive, is the impact of such coercion at home and not just within the expeditionary counter-insurgency theatre of operations. The achievement of legitimacy is therefore multi-dimensional. Such complexity must be borne in mind when designing kinetic military operations or adopting significant legislative changes that affect civil liberties within counter-insurgency campaigns.

If one reviews this chapter's observations using Thompson's fundamental principles, the rationale for the principles' continued relevance, and inclusion in current counter-insurgency doctrine is obvious:

- "The government must have a clear political aim: to establish and maintain a free, independent and united country, which is politically and economically stable and viable."<sup>104</sup> The UK was clear that Malaya would be a self governing nation, and that the UK would not lay aside its responsibilities until the communists had been defeated and the long term security of Malaya was guaranteed.<sup>105</sup> Communist political motives were negated
- "The government must function in accordance with law."<sup>106</sup> Whilst draconian from a modern perspective, British counter-insurgency tactics were less brutal than that undertaken by the

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<sup>101</sup> Jackson, "British Counter-Insurgency," p349.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.: p350.

<sup>103</sup> Paul Dixon argues that "*Templer's Hearts and Minds Campaign*" was a misnomer, and "*concealed a repressive militaristic campaign which relied upon excessive coercion*" – See Dixon: p354.

<sup>104</sup> Thompson, p50.

<sup>105</sup> Jackson, *The Malayan Emergency and Indonesian Confrontation*, p24.

<sup>106</sup> Thompson, p52.

communists. Moreover, the country's governance, which was accepted by all ethnic elements of Malayan society, worked well. Counter-insurgency tactics were viewed as legitimate.

- “The government must have an overall plan.”<sup>107</sup> This was supported by the overarching guidance from the UK Government that Malayan Independence would take place, and be sustainable.
- “The government must give priority to defeating the political subversion, not the guerrilla.”<sup>108</sup>  
The use of strategic hamlets, and of physical separation of the population from the insurgents prior to the latter's destruction, combined with the a stable national political body, emphasised the appropriate focus on the causes and not the effects of the insurgency
- “In the guerrilla phase of the war, a government must secure its base first.”<sup>109</sup> The granting of Emergency Powers, of unified civil-military chains of command, the significant force levels used to secure population centres and vital government infrastructure, and its ultimate success, verify the principle's relevance.

Thompson's fundamental rules do still hold, in principle at least. Current counter-insurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan point to a lack of doctrinal compliance in key areas – this may be why many have questioned their validity. The reason for their relevance lies in their deliberately generic nature. The rules recognise the unique nature of every counter-insurgency operation; no one insurgency is ever the same. As Colonel CE Calwell stated when comparing the multiplicity of colonial policing and guerrilla warfare operations: Each small war presents new features.<sup>110</sup>

One can therefore see that the principles are only of use if applied generically, or perhaps when focusing on functional areas that can provide an adaptable framework upon whose principles a tailored “situation-dependant” campaign, can be designed. Used in this manner, one can see that British doctrine is absolutely right in applying Thompson's principles, which are as resonant today as they were in previous years. However, when one reviews British Colonial History, particularly that connected to

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., p55.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., p57.

<sup>110</sup> Sir Charles Edward Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles and Practice*, 3rd ed.(Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1906), p33.

India, major elements of Thompson's doctrine are present within British Imperial policy, strategy and planning. These matters will be discussed in the following chapter.

## Chapter 9 – INDIA: THE ORGANISATIONAL FOUNDATION OF THE EMPIRE

The United Kingdom has for many years been considered peerless in terms of its success in the conduct of counter-insurgency operations. As a rule of thumb, most academics point to luminaries such as Robert Thompson and Generals Kitson, Erskine, Templer and Briggs as being the intellectual drivers for such success. Critically, their spheres of influence coincided with the post-colonial drawdown of the British Empire following the successful conclusion of the Second World War. There is however a significant omission – that of India. Whilst not a counter-insurgency campaign as such, the Imperial mechanisms for devolved rule, and Great Britain's presence in India for over 300 years, are implicitly connected to the doctrine that followed the Indian Independence, and that affected counter insurgency operations in Malaya, Borneo, Dhofar, Kenya and Northern Ireland. The following paragraphs will outline these connections, highlighting direct parallels to both the aforementioned operations, and the current enduring counter-insurgency commitment in Afghanistan.

In 1609, a representative of the London East India Company named William Hawkins arrived in Agra in order to request permission to establish a trading post at Surat.<sup>111</sup> His presence, which pre-dated a formal emissary of King James 1<sup>st</sup>, represented the beginning of the British Empire's connection to India.<sup>112</sup> The British presence spanned a period of three hundred and thirty eight years, ultimately replacing the Mughal Empire, and creating an independent India and Pakistan.<sup>113</sup> The scale of the country, the number of its inhabitants and the potential economic benefit to the British Empire are noteworthy. B.N Pandey highlights:

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<sup>111</sup> Michael Edwards, *A History of India*, 1st ed.(London: Thomas and Hudson, 1961), pp163-166.

<sup>112</sup> The first British Governor General of Fort William in Bengal was Warren Hastings (October 1774), although the formal recognition of India as a colony did not take place until 1858 with the proclamation of Queen Victoria: As outlined in *Ibid.*, p354.

<sup>113</sup> Both states were formally recognized in 1947, enshrined in the Indian Independence Act of 1947.

In 1901, the Indian Empire was 1,766,597 square miles (12, 000 square miles larger than Europe (less Russia))..... and contained 294, 361, 056 persons (1/5<sup>th</sup> of the world's population).<sup>114</sup>

Indeed, the economic benefits to Great Britain were huge, particularly in light of its nascent industrial revolution. Great Britain's presence in India was certainly not based upon any type of altruism – to advocate such would be a gross misrepresentation of the truth. The London East India Company, which pre-dated a formal Imperial presence, was a business interested in financial gain, and not necessarily the interests of the Indians themselves – imperial interests were not too dissimilar. However, indubitably there were some benefits for Indians, although they did take some time to mature and were perhaps more a product of luck than judgement. Ironically, these benefits have affected the very make up of modern Indian social and political society – as Michael Edwards stated, the English provided the language of unity and the structure of freedom.<sup>115</sup> Ironically, as will be seen, it also sowed the seeds of a blossoming Indian independence movement

The Army Field Manual Volume 1 Part 10 reiterates the British focus upon Governance, Security, Stability and Development. Ironically, although not referred to using the same terminology, these were key lines of operation in colonial Indian governance.<sup>116</sup> They are used as a framework for analysis in the paragraphs below.

The replacement of the Mughal system of feudal governance with that that of imperial checks and balances was noteworthy. Indeed, it was enabled by significant government investment, accompanied by major political change over a protracted period of time;<sup>117</sup> the importance of time will be discussed in more detail subsequently. The Charter Act of 1793 improved the performance

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<sup>114</sup> B.N. Pandey, *The Break-up of British India*, 1st ed.(London: Macmillan 1969), pp2, 3.

<sup>115</sup> Edwards, p257.

<sup>116</sup> AFM Volume 1 Part 10 is the draft British Counter-Insurgency Doctrine publication.

<sup>117</sup> Such political changes connected to governance, included those affecting the Executive, Judicial and Legislative branches.



of institutional administrative bodies (the pre cursor, it could be argued, to the Indian Civil Service) working within the London East Indian Company. It legislated the requirement for a greater understanding of Indian languages and customs and standards of education for employees. It also recognized the importance of cultural perspectives and the importance of the population; both are critical components of existing and draft British counter insurgency doctrine and are often referred to as products of the Malayan Emergency.<sup>118</sup> Michael Cranshaw goes further stating that the British approach to counter-insurgency used as a basis the colony model of governance;<sup>119</sup> it recognised the requirement for adjustments to policy and governmental structure based upon local needs, and formed the foundation for subsequent post-colonial counter-insurgency operations.<sup>120</sup>

However, it was not until the Public Services Commission Report of 1886, which was completed under Sir Charles Aitcheson that a significant number of indigenous personnel were able to work within the reorganised Indian Civil Service. The Report instigated a number of significant revisions, in particular, the creation of the Provincial and Subordinate Civil Service. This led directly to the employment of indigenous District Magistrates, Deputy Magistrates, Deputy Commissioners (Police) and Sub Divisional officers (Police and Judiciary). This process, originally coined by Sir Percival Griffiths, was called the indianisation of the colonial governance system.<sup>121</sup> Indeed, by 1935 nearly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Indian Civil Service (ICS) were Indian.<sup>122</sup> The impact of this is self evident, although the time needed to do so is often overlooked. The population had a vested interest and role in Imperial success, and was involved directly in its organisation and expansion. Such integration takes time, and when undertaken from a standing start, with little or no existing

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<sup>118</sup> There are remarkable similarities to the "Committee" system of governance and policing used in Malaya to that, which had already been tried and tested in India.

<sup>119</sup> Michael Cranshaw, "Running a Country: The British Colonial Experience and Its Relevance to Present-Day Concerns," *The Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Shrivenham* (2007): p9.

<sup>120</sup> Such governmental structure was needed at national, regional and district level.

<sup>121</sup> Sir Percival Griffiths, *The British Impact on India*, 1st ed.(London: Macdonald, 1952), p194.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p195.

state apparatus, as has happened in Afghanistan, it is all the more difficult. Indeed, in Afghanistan, it took eight years for the British Army to create the Civil/Military Headquarters in Helmand (CMMH) to coordinate joint inter-agency activity, let alone delegate such responsibilities to indigenous organs of state at national, regional, or local levels. It would appear that the existence of state apparatus designed to achieve effective governance, created in India, and used subsequently in post colonial policing operation, might have been overlooked in modern iterations of British counter-insurgency doctrine. Such architecture will not necessarily exist, as was the case in Iraq after completion of Phase III operations on Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. This omission must be incorporated to existing doctrine, with explicit recognition of the time needed to achieve such governance; the latter point will be politically sensitive, particularly given media sensationalism and the length of respective terms in office within both UK and U.S. Administrations.

More effective governance was achieved across India by “selective” equality, delegation of responsibility and indigenous empowerment through gradual social reform. Equality within India, which still retains deep caste-related societal divisions, remains unresolved today. The British approach was one of realism, endeavouring to use indigenous personnel in the day to day administrative coordination at regional and district level – leverage of locals by their employment in support of Imperial goals. In other words, achieving local buy-in or ownership, and a sense of belonging. Indeed, it played on the Orwellian benefits of the Caste society; some people were more equal than others. This cultural sensitivity, was imperial pragmatism, for its own benefit, at its best, and is a tenet that has resonance with current complex tribal, ethnic and religious issues in the Afghanistan theatre of operations.

For such regional and district administration to take place, significant legislative change was required, and subsequently proclaimed. The result was a theoretically impartial judiciary that was far removed from the Mughal feudal system, which was even more nepotistic.

Such advances were only attainable with dramatic social reform, but which was sensitive to Indian culture. Such sensitivity was achieved by the adoption of a system based upon perfect religious neutrality.<sup>123</sup> Indeed, Queen Victoria was explicit in mitigating such indigenous concerns, as witnessed by her statement to the Imperial dominions regarding perceptions of culture/religious interference – there would be no attempt to impose Christianity.<sup>124</sup> Such an approach, of cultural sensitivity, perhaps including a refinement or even diminution of policy or strategic ends, is becoming increasingly important in theological/religious based counter insurgencies.

Development forms one of the cornerstones to current DfID and Foreign and Commonwealth Office policy – the Imperial approach was no different in terms of education and infrastructure, both of which would benefit the Empire in the longer term. Again, this was not necessarily a product of altruism, rather it was hoped that such policies would sustain imperial presence for the long term. Construction within India throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, which was undertaken at significant cost, was central to both Indian development and the maximization of Imperial economic benefit. It was a deliberate Imperial policy. By 1932, 42, 000 miles of railway had been constructed at a cost of £650, 000, 000.<sup>125</sup> This enabled greater economic exploitation, and paradoxically, reduced the potential emergence of famine through improved strategic lines of communication across India. Such strategic development was enabled by significant educational investment. Previously manned by sappers, the Royal Engineering College at Coopers Hill was exploited from 1871 onwards, with

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<sup>123</sup> Pandey, p16.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p18.

<sup>125</sup> Griffiths, p426.

the express purpose of training indigenous Civil Engineers for employment within the Indian Public Works Department.<sup>126</sup>

As intimated, education was key to both expounding Imperial benefits to the indigenous population (long-term influence operations), and also to achieving greater self-reliance within the indigenous population. The latter, it was hoped, would, reduce costs attributable to the Crown by ensuring greater employment of educated Indians in positions of greater administrative authority. Initially in 1835, the Filtration Scheme of education was adopted in order to impart English education to upper class Indians, who would through social contact, ensure that education filtered down to the other castes.<sup>127</sup> Progress continued, and in 1854, the “London Despatch” from the British Government established an education system that was referred to as the Magna Carta of English education, which was to be the foundation of modern education there [India].<sup>128</sup>

Critically, in 1857, advances of much greater magnitude had been achieved, with the creation of State Universities in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, and the establishment of a network of graded state schools.<sup>129</sup> This legacy remains, and continues to produce first-rate academics that are employed throughout the world.

It is in the area of Security where perhaps some of the most challenging dilemmas existed, and remain so today. The British Empire was an exceptionally capable, global diplomatic force. Imperial progress and growth was brought about by shrewd, perhaps some would say even underhand, diplomacy, which was ever cognizant of the role of culture in empire building. Indeed, the British presence in India, was facilitated during the twilight of the Mughal dynasty by the

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<sup>126</sup> Sapper - a British Army term for Royal Engineer Officer/Soldier.

<sup>127</sup> Griffiths, p201.

<sup>128</sup> Pandey, p14.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

creation of mutual trade agreements. Subsequently, as British Imperial power waxed, stability was achieved by the creation of alliances and of formal recognition and use, of the existing indigenous Mughal societal framework. The Mughal feudal nobility, the Zemindar and Taluqdar were neutered by their inclusion within the imperial construct, with concomitant economic benefits; critically, this was at the expense of the Indian Middle Class.<sup>130</sup> Ironically, it was social reform, and the rise of the Indian Middle Class (not dissimilar to the impact of middle classes upon the feudal knights in the Dark Ages) that was oppressed at beginning of Imperial rule, which led to the demise of the Empire through increased nationalism. As such we can see that security is not just a purely military function; it can be achieved by diplomatic or indeed economic means. More importantly, one can see that social reform and empowerment, albeit not overnight, were perhaps the most profound non-military activities.

As intimated, security is not the domain of the military alone. Indigenous police are necessary, acting in unison with an impartial judiciary, and enabled by an effective legislative and executive body. Again, there is evidence of dramatic change within India, albeit at a glacial pace; it was the gradual implementation, which was sensitive to local customs and social hierarchy, which minimized the impact upon society and increased the likelihood of its acceptance. Cornwallis replaced the old Mughal Police system, which had been supported by military forces under local governors, in 1796. He established Superintendants of police, who reported to central powers, the latter of which were theoretically free from local influence and power. This was an attempt at direct control and influence, but in doing so achieving greater impartiality. In 1860, the Government of India appointed a Commission on Police Administration and recommended the adoption of its findings across India. In essence, its findings led to the creation of District Magistrates who became

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<sup>130</sup> Zemindars and Taluqdars were Indian feudal landowners in British colonial India who were responsible for collecting and paying to the government the taxes on land under their jurisdiction.

responsible for law and order, supported by a local Superintendent of Police, and which created a subordinate alliance to the state.<sup>131</sup> One can see this hierarchical system bears many similarities to the “committee” system of delegated governance, security and intelligence gathering as espoused by pre-eminent counter-insurgency historians, including Robert Thompson and Generals Briggs and Templer. One could perhaps go further, contending that this “committee” system stems from Imperial policing experiences in India, and not Malaya.

The omission of India, and its colonial governance and policing systems from modern British doctrine, is a significant omission – perhaps this is political correctness. Ironically, it is the very failure of the British Empire in India, caused by its social reform, development and governance that highlights its relevance to counter-insurgency doctrine. In particular, the British long-term policy focus, and its reliance upon effective indigenous self-governance and economic growth that was underpinned by industrial infrastructure and lines of communication, was instrumental to India’s regional pre-eminence today, although this was not a result of Imperial benevolence or altruism. It cannot be coincidence that these are the very areas that both test and verify current counter-insurgency thinking within the British defence and inter-agency communities. Sir Percival Griffiths states that the work in which the British Empire was engaged in India, was that of modifying, unavoidably-modifying – not harshly, not suddenly, but slowly, gently and with sympathy – the whole collective social life and character of the population.<sup>132</sup> Indeed, Sir Percival’s observation is reiterated by Michael Edwards, who states that the benefits to both India and Great Britain were

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<sup>131</sup> Griffiths, p198.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p234.

achieved by the final, but slow, establishment of an alien system of government deriving its principles, though not its practice, from English political ideas.<sup>133</sup>

Modern society is impatient. The consumer is always right and as such, the electorate likes to think of itself as the ultimate consumer when it comes to the timely assessment of political success. The impact of such impatience, is magnified by media sensationalism, and the intrusive nature of modern communications. Unfortunately, counter insurgency operations are, as a rule, rather lengthy. The importance of time, for both counter insurgents, insurgents and the affected populations, cannot be overlooked – time is needed for reconciliation, enculturation (in the case of India this was the benefits of imperial ways and means) and equally, although more negative, of the associated counter-insurgency costs of policing, security, and even popularity at home. There is clear evidence that changes to indigenous culture require time. Moreover, such changes are both dangerous, and perhaps unachievable, particularly where religion plays a central role in local culture. In considering the conduct of counter-insurgency operations, Politicians and senior Military / Civil Service Officers would do well to note the similarities between unintended benefits of Imperial policy within India and the current generic British counter-insurgency objectives outlined in this Chapter.<sup>134</sup> They must not overlook the need for time to achieve such objectives, particularly when a fickle electorate at home is growing increasingly averse to interventionism.

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<sup>133</sup> Edwards, p254.

<sup>134</sup> Governance, security and development are generic principles used in current British counter-insurgency doctrine.

## Chapter 10 – NORTHERN IRELAND: SOME HOME TRUTHS AND OWN GOALS

On 14<sup>th</sup> August 1969, British Army units permanently garrisoned within Northern Ireland deployed onto the streets of Belfast and Londonderry under the provisions of Military Aid to the Civil Powers legislation. Operation BANNER, the official name for the military support to the Royal Ulster Constabulary, ended at midnight on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2007; the counter-insurgency campaign lasted thirty eight years, although many still feel it remains unresolved.<sup>135</sup> Indeed, two British Soldiers were murdered outside Massereene Barracks in County Antrim on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2009.<sup>136</sup> A number of suspects, all of whom are believed to be members of the Continuity IRA, have been arrested.

The causes for the schism within Northern Ireland are deep rooted within the psyche of both Protestant and Roman Catholics residents. Indeed, they continue to divide Northern Irish politics and society. The British Army's approach, and indeed, its relative successes and failures, are all connected to the compliance with, or failure of, British counter-insurgency doctrinal principles. The following paragraphs will highlight such successes and failures of doctrine, in an environment that it could be argued is much more "sensitised" than its expeditionary counterpart. The campaign is much closer to home; in fact, the English population has been affected significantly, both directly and indirectly.<sup>137</sup>

At the outset of the campaign, the Chief of the General Staff visited Northern Ireland in 1971 and identified the principal weakness as intelligence gathering.<sup>138</sup> Although this may have been the case at the start of Operation BANNER, the same was not at its conclusion. The British Army adopted General Sir Frank Kitson's<sup>139</sup> principles regarding the requirement for an intelligence organisation that relies upon a large number of low grade sources in order to build a mosaic, which would lead to more

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<sup>135</sup> Paramilitary Groups continue to conduct operations, many of which are criminal related, within Northern Ireland. The most capable groups are Republican – The Continuity IRA and Real IRA.

<sup>136</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2009/mar/20/funeral-soldier-ira-northern-ireland>.

<sup>137</sup> For example, on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1996, the IRA detonated a large Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device in a Shopping centre in Manchester, injuring over 200 people -

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/june/15/newsid\\_2527000/2527009.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/june/15/newsid_2527000/2527009.stm).

<sup>138</sup> Chris Ryder, *A Special Kind of Courage: 321 Eod Squadron-Battling the Bombers*(London: Methuen Publishers Limited, 2005), p47.

<sup>139</sup> General Sir Frank Kitson GBE, KCB, MC and Bar, DL was Commander 39 Infantry Brigade (Northern Ireland) and subsequently Commander in Chief United Kingdom Land Forces.



effective and actionable higher level intelligence.<sup>140</sup> In effect, every serviceman/woman became a soldier first and intelligence gatherer second. Indeed there were specific tactics developed, which enabled the soldier to report intelligence gathered on routine patrols, or local leave, which could serve as a trigger for subsequent covert targeted counter-insurgency operations.<sup>141</sup> The success of covert operations, enabled by intelligence had a significant impact upon the Provisional IRA's operational capability. Indeed, on 8 May 1987 a Special Forces Operation destroyed the East Tyrone Provisional IRA Active Service Unit as it prepared to conduct an insurgent operation near Loughall. However, such successes were tactical; they were not operational or strategic successes, used attritional tactics, and did nothing to resolve the political schisms that underpinned the conflict.

The year 1968 witnessed the birth of the Civil Rights Movement within Northern Ireland. The movement consisted of a wide range of activists from across all ethnic and demographic groups, including housing activists, socialists, nationalists, unionists, republicans, students, trade unionists and political representatives.<sup>142</sup>

The Cameron Report in to the Civil Unrest went further, outlining that:

Many of the protesters were bright young university-educated Catholics, who had been able to avail of the free education brought in by the 1949 Education Act. This movement attempted to bring a new dynamic to Northern Ireland politics. The demand for basic civil rights from the Northern Ireland government was an effort to move the traditional fault-lines away from the familiar Catholic-Protestant, nationalist-unionist, republican-loyalist and Irish-British divides by demanding basic rights for all citizens of Britain.<sup>143</sup>

One can categorise the key issues that bound the Civil Rights movement together as the following:

The inadequacy of housing provision by certain local authorities.

Well-documented discrimination in the making of local government appointments.

A sense of resentment and frustration among the Catholic population at failure to achieve either acceptance on the part of the Government or of any need to investigate these complaints.

Resentment, particularly among Catholics, as to the existence of the Ulster Special

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<sup>140</sup> General Sir Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), p73.

<sup>141</sup> Such operations, and their associated tactics were referred to as "Operation CLEAN".

<sup>142</sup> Chairman: The Honourable Lord Cameron, *Disturbances in Northern Ireland - Report of the Commission Appointed by the Governor of Northern Ireland* 1969. Cmd. 532, Chapter 16, Paragraph 229.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

Whilst religious and political tension and discrimination remain in certain parts of society within Northern Ireland, the modern social, economic and political landscape bears little resemblance to that of 1969. All of the aforementioned Civil Rights pre-requisites have been met. Political change has been perhaps the most dramatic. Sinn Fein now has twenty-seven Assembly Members and five Ministers.<sup>145</sup> Martin McGuinness, a former member of the Provisional IRA Army Council is now Deputy First Minister in the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Ulster Special Constabulary was disbanded and the Royal Ulster Constabulary no longer exists; the Police Service of Northern Ireland replaced the latter. Moreover, the housing and socio economic issues are no longer a concern, certainly not in the order of magnitude of that in the 1960s and 70s: economic growth (in 2006) was 5.6% - the second highest of all UK regions;<sup>146</sup> for the financial year 2009 to 2010, gross resources available for Housing within Northern Ireland will be in the region of £743 million.<sup>147</sup> Political and social reform has resolved the major causes of the Northern Ireland troubles, not counter-insurgency tactics per se. However, there are valuable insights into doctrinal successes, which are outlined below.

Inter-agency coordination is a key tenet to successful counter-insurgency operations. Equally, such coordination requires clear command and control responsibilities. This latter area was a point of contention for Frank Kitson, who advocated a single intelligence organisation, controlled by one operational commander; Kitson felt that this ought to be a military commander.<sup>148</sup> However, during Operation BANNER, the position of the military in relation to the police was clear as can be seen from the following extract from a set of patrol orders; the unifying purpose to all joint patrol missions was the defeat of terrorism in support of the RUC.<sup>149</sup> Such clarity of purpose and primacy was needed, but insufficient on its own. Mechanisms or organisations were also needed to improve inter-agency unity. A Tasking and Coordination Group (TCG) was set up within each of the Royal Ulster

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<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> <http://www.sinnfein.ie/assembly-members>.

<sup>146</sup> <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/news/news-deti/news-deti-april-2008/news-deti-110408-minister-comments-on.htm>.

<sup>147</sup> <http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/hsdiv-housing.htm>.

<sup>148</sup> Melshen, Slide 51.

<sup>149</sup> "The Defeat of terrorism in support of the RUC": The unifying purpose for all British Army overt counter terrorist patrols in Northern Ireland: Lieutenant AP Layton, *Platoon Orders (Primary Multiple)- Counter Terrorist Patrols in Fermanagh* (Enniskillen, Northern Ireland, 1992).

Constabulary/Police Service Northern Ireland Regions. Headed by a Police Officer, it was a joint inter-agency organisation that reported to the Regional Head of Special Branch (Police) and ensured a coordinated collection, collation, analysis and kinetic response, to all source information;<sup>150</sup> it was very successful throughout Operation BANNER. However, such a joint inter-agency approach was not evident across all lines of operation. At the tactical level, no truly joint inter-agency Headquarters were ever created. The security (police/military) line of operation was the only effective joint element of the campaign at the tactical level; the primary counter-insurgency coordinating Headquarters was based upon a military Brigade Headquarters and the civilian staff were employed as either administrative support staff or local community liaison officers.<sup>151</sup> The only true point at which military and civil (non RUC/PSNI) lines of operation were coordinated was at the Three Star level within HQ Northern Ireland.

The repercussions of illegitimate operations conducted during the 1970s within Northern Ireland, are still felt today. Kitson stressed that all units, including those that were specialised, must remain within the law.<sup>152</sup> Unfortunately, there have been occasions where both legitimacy and legality have been questioned, both of which served to isolate further the population from the State. On 30th January 1972, soldiers of the 1st Battalion The Parachute Regiment shot twenty-seven people during a Civil Rights Association Protest within the Bogside area of Londonderry. Whilst one cannot speculate regarding the legality of the operation, particularly in light of the ongoing Inquiry to the incident, there can be no doubt as to its implications to the Catholic population across Northern Ireland; significant questions remain regarding the use of minimum force and the legitimacy of the operation itself. The “Bloody Sunday”<sup>153</sup> Inquiry has lasted eleven years, has yet to finish, and has cost £400 million to date<sup>154</sup> – this represents the financial cost of a failure to ensure legitimacy in military operations. The societal costs are more profound and are unlikely to be resolved for generations to come. The death of fourteen civilians, all of whom were shot by paratroopers on Bloody Sunday represents a signal failure in the application of British counter-insurgency doctrine, both in terms of the use of minimum force and

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<sup>150</sup> All Sources included Open Source, Military, Police and Covert Human Intelligence.

<sup>151</sup> HQ 3, 8 and 39 Infantry Brigades worked direct to a Three Star Headquarters based in Lisburn, Northern Ireland.

<sup>152</sup> General Sir Frank Kitson, *Bunch of Five*, 1st ed.(London: Faber and Faber, 1977), p289.

<sup>153</sup> Bloody Sunday was one of the popular names used to describe the shooting incident in Londonderry.

<sup>154</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/1523111/Bloody-Sunday-Full-inquiry-cost-400m.-July-7-bombs-No-inquiry-too-expensive.html>.

the maintenance of legitimacy.

Legitimacy is affected by a number of factors, primarily ethical norms, themselves affected by societal perceptions – counter-insurgency activity must be both legal, and morally appropriate to the population. In other words, it must be viewed in a positive fashion, and requires that the affected population view it as fair. The adoption of internment in 1971 was perhaps the most controversial and disputed Government decision of the whole Northern Ireland Campaign; its ramifications were profound. Serious concerns expressed by the senior military staff within the Ministry of Defence, including Lord Carver, the then Chief of the General Staff regarding its design and intent, went unanswered. Indeed, the response from the government to Lord Carver appeared to be rather evasive.<sup>155</sup> More worryingly, according to Cabinet Minutes, Sir Philip Allen, Home Office permanent under secretary, told the Prime Minister, Edward Heath, and other senior cabinet members that there was little doubt that the treatment of detainees would be considered legally to constitute an assault.<sup>156</sup> When one considers the impact upon the population, the majority of whom affected were Roman Catholic, and more likely to have closer links to the primary insurgent organisation, the Provisional IRA, the disadvantages to the counter insurgent that stem from such a policy, appear more profound.

Ironically, it is in spite of the campaign approach to the Northern Ireland troubles that the real reason for the success becomes more apparent. Michael Cranshaw is correct in confirming that success was achieved by massive changes to the political and social structures within the Province.<sup>157</sup> Political reform, economic investment and social change have been the main drivers for success in the Province,<sup>158</sup> although Dissident Republican terrorist groups remain a serious threat. In addition, PIRA remains undefeated and is a dominant social factor in the religiously divided geographical districts in most towns and cities.

Equally, the impact of time cannot be overlooked, in terms of cost, and the potential for reconciliation. The Northern Ireland Campaign lasted for thirty-eight years and claimed the lives of one

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<sup>155</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/uk\\_confidential/1731567.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/uk_confidential/1731567.stm).

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Crawshaw: p14.

<sup>158</sup> Northern Ireland is referred to as “The Province.”

thousand four hundred and sixty three prison officers, policemen and soldiers.<sup>159</sup> When reviewing current counter-insurgency campaigns, and planning for those that have yet to take place, we would do well to remember the length of time normally required to achieve success. The need for significant political commitment, in the long term, is self evident.

The occasional failure to maintain legitimacy, and ignorance of the rule of law or use of excessive force, all point to a lack of compliance with fundamental tenets to British counter-insurgency doctrine; such doctrine existed and still does today. For doctrine to be successful, it must not only be taught but also learnt and implemented.

There was no holistic cross government approach that was evident during the Northern Ireland troubles – responsibilities were compartmentalised within both UK Government, and provincial government bodies - coordination was ineffective, partially because of conflicting interests, within London and Stormont, but also because of overly complex organisational responsibilities in geographically distinct locations. Moreover, the military line of operation was separate to its inter-agency counterparts, particularly at the operational level, which was in compliance with period British counter-insurgency doctrine.

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<sup>159</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2009/mar/10/northernireland-ukcrime>.

## Chapter 11 – IRAQ: THE COALITION OF THE WILLING

An analysis of the post conflict operation in Iraq offers a unique and contemporary window into coalition planning and conduct of expeditionary counter-insurgency operations. On the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of December 2001, the Army staff at the Pentagon convened a meeting of two dozen military experts, Middle East experts, intelligence analysts and diplomats.<sup>160</sup> Its findings were prescient, stating that the United States might win the war and lose the peace.<sup>161</sup> It is well known fact within military circles, that on both sides of the Atlantic, post-conflict operational planning was not undertaken in as coherent a fashion as it ought to have been. This Chapter will outline a number of the challenges and oversights. Planning for the conduct of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM commenced two months after the 9/11 attacks.<sup>162</sup> In late September 2002, Secretary Rumsfeld argued that the Department of Defense was better set up to run post war Iraq than the State Department.<sup>163</sup> It was a view that was confirmed subsequently by Secretary Powell. Much planning was undertaken, but none was coordinated effectively across all government agencies. Equally, it could be argued that there was reluctance on the part of some senior commanders to recognise the scale of post conflict operations. In a message to Secretary Rumsfeld's subordinates regarding post conflict operational planning, General Tommy Franks stated that they were to pay attention to the day after, and he would pay attention to the day of [Sic].<sup>164</sup>

It would be wholly inaccurate to state that no planning for post-conflict operations took place; such a conclusion would do a grave disservice to many people within both the U.S. and UK Governments, and joint coalition staffs. Thomas E. Ricks rather succinctly summed up the major challenge stating that "it wasn't that there was no planning, there was a lot...but there was no one really in charge of it."<sup>165</sup> The main conclusion has to be that the lack of allocated responsibilities, across all agencies, and the lack of sufficient emphasis on the magnitude of the potential challenges, set the conditions for likely post-conflict failure. As General Tommy Franks said to General Victor E. Renuart

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<sup>160</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco - the Military Adventure in Iraq*, 1st ed.(New York: The Penguin Press, 2006), p72.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Bob Woodward, *State of Denial*, 1st ed.(New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), p83.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., p91.

<sup>164</sup> Ricks, p79.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

when attempting to avoid the issue of reconstruction, “I’ve got my marching orders. The Secretary wants us to focus on Security.”<sup>166</sup>

More worryingly, coalition planning also appeared to be rather disjointed. Staff from the UK’s Permanent Joint Headquarters, who were responsible for the UK’s campaign design, were politely excluded from key CENTCOM planning for much of September and October 2002.<sup>167</sup> Unfortunately, a coordinated inter-agency plan for post-conflict operations was also lacking in the UK. Effective cross government coordination did not take place; the internal Ministry of Defence (MOD) Operational Security (OPSEC) regime meant that few people in MOD, and very few in other Government Departments (OGD) were planning the overall operations, including Phase IV. Departments had very different views of the crisis.<sup>168</sup>

General (U.S. Army Retired) Garner was responsible for much of the initial Phase IV planning as part of the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Affairs (ORHA). Subsequently, his endeavours were assumed by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) under Ambassador Bremer. The British Army perspective regarding the ORHA focus was clear:

ORHA planning focused on US priorities.<sup>169</sup> As such, it was also Baghdad centric.

This was to have a profound effect in the conduct of post conflict operations in Iraq. Within Southern Iraq, the British Army assumed both military and non-military responsibilities because of its “Occupation Power’s” legal obligations linked to the Geneva Convention. However, CPA (South), which was responsible for the provinces of Maysaan and Basrah, reported direct to Baghdad and not to the UK led Multi National Division (South East). Such were the complexity and contradictions of its coordination and command, that it was decided in 2003 that the UK would not take on the administration and reconstruction of the Provinces for which it was the Occupying Power.<sup>170</sup> Such a change, whilst perhaps one borne of pragmatism, divorced military lines of operation from their civilian

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<sup>166</sup> Woodward, p91.

<sup>167</sup> Chief of the General Staff, *Operations in Iraq - an Analysis from the Land Perspective*. p2-3.

<sup>168</sup> Assistant Chief of the General Staff, *Stability Operations in Iraq (Op Telic 2-5) - an Analysis from the Land Perspective*, p2.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., p13.

counterparts and was diametrically opposed to both existing counter-insurgency doctrine and historical precedents. In other words, the military and civil lines of operations were neither synchronized, nor often convergent in their respective aims. The subsequent analysis of Phase I to III operations in Iraq conducted by the British Army highlighted the increased likelihood of the UK's subordinate role in a future expeditionary counter-insurgency campaign. Moreover, it recognised that British doctrine and staff training should consider this.<sup>171</sup> This has yet to take place.

During a presentation given in 2007, the former Commander Field Army, General Graham Lamb, used the analogy of tactical success and operational failure to outline areas of fault in the conduct of current counter-insurgency operations. The causes that contributed to the operational level failure were connected to poor leadership and led to incidents such as prisoner abuse, despite defeating insurgents in tactical kinetic operations. There were a number of catalysts that led to his exhortation, the most prominent of which took place in the British Area of Operations during May 2003; Iraqi civilians were abused, one of whom, died. The death of Baha Mousa remains the subject of further criminal proceedings. Such acts undermine the legitimacy of counter-insurgency operations, are seized upon by insurgents in order to maximize negative publicity, and serve to isolate counter insurgents from the population they seek to protect. Adjustments to training linked to moral components of warfare have already been incorporated into Annual Mandatory Training Tests in order to minimize the reoccurrence of such activity, but must be emphasized during pre deployment training.

The years 2005 to 2007 witnessed a spiralling descent into borderline anarchy across significant swathes of Iraq. Many of the coalition troops were focussed predominantly on kinetic operations. Indeed, such a focus was often vital just to sustain Forward Operating Bases in the large cities.<sup>172</sup> It was felt that in certain areas of southern Iraq, the British presence was merely inflaming the insurgency and that the 10<sup>th</sup> (Iraqi) Division ought to assume greater responsibility, sooner. The peak of the violence in

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid., p16.

<sup>172</sup> As an example, during 2007 whilst deployed on Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, 1 STAFFORDS Battle Group, of which the author was Second in Command, had to undertake twice weekly resupply patrols, which required the dedication of two Armoured Infantry Companies to secure the Main Supply Route – the Battle Group was in effect fighting in order to sustain itself, not to conduct counter-insurgency operations.



Northern Iraq was early 2007. David Killcullen argues that the subsequent reduction in violence was coincidental with:

General Petraeus and Admiral Crocker's adoption of a bottom up policy of securing neighbourhoods and populations first and breaking the cycle of violence at its origin, instead of continuing to wait for top down political accommodation.<sup>173</sup>

Its success led many to question the validity of existing British counter-insurgency doctrine, particularly when compared to the situation in Basrah during March 2008, which saw the need for US reinforcements to assist the 1st Iraqi Armoured Division launch an operation in Basrah, codenamed "Saulat al-Fursan," meaning Operation Charge of the Knights. General Petraeus' Surge plan was absolutely in line with existing British counter-insurgency doctrine. It relied upon both indigenous and non-indigenous Security Force elements, focussed upon the population's protection, and as such enabled the effective isolation of the insurgent. Of equal if not greater importance, the Sahwa or Awakening movement, initially seen in the Anbar Province, had gathered such momentum that by Spring 2008:

It had reached nearly two-thirds of the country's provinces with Sunni volunteers, dubbed "Concerned Local Citizens" or "Sons of Iraq" by the U.S. military, in Nineveh, Diyala, Babil, Salahuddin, and Baghdad.<sup>174</sup>

Arguably, it was in this area, that of indigenous responsibility for security, that the real success was garnered. Such activity is implicit to British counter-insurgency doctrine, and was very much in evidence during previous colonial counter-insurgency campaigns, including Malaya.

Operation IRAQI FREEDOM confirmed that British Military doctrine is appropriate for complex counter-insurgency operations. However, in such operations, particularly where geographical, ethnic and religious factors play prominent roles, plans and tactics must be refined to local cultural circumstances.<sup>175</sup> Such plans and tactics are supported by doctrine but will require clear policy direction and support, particularly regarding resourcing and levels of acceptable risk. Risk must be accepted in terms of indigenous security force deployments – local ownership of security, supported appropriately by non-indigenous security capabilities as required, ensures greater likelihood of "buy in"

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<sup>173</sup> David Killcullen, *The Accidental Guerilla - Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* (Oxford University Press, 2009), p122.

<sup>174</sup> <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/04/28/AR2008042801120.html>.

<sup>175</sup> During the Mesopotamian Insurrection of 1920, 60, 000 British military and civilian personnel, 23, 000 Indian and 60, 000 followers were deployed in theatre – See Lieutenant General Sir Aylmer L. Haldane, *The Insurrection in Mesopotamia 1920*, 14th ed. (Nashville: The Battery Press Inc, 1922), p325.

or perhaps “gives them [the population] something to lose”. Focusing upon the population, as did General Petraeus, is not anathema to British counter-insurgency, it is its core. The British Army need not gaze at its navel regarding the veracity of its counter-insurgency doctrine. Quite simply, it must follow it!

## CONCLUSION

Whilst insurgent environments appear to be increasing in complexity and number, the types of insurgencies themselves are not, as advocated by Mackinlay, and included in the draft Army Field Manual (AFM) Volume 1 Part 10. Feral gangs, militias and clans or tribes are not necessarily insurgencies in themselves. Rather, they are elements that can be present at all or some stages of an Insurgency. Mackinlay's individual types of insurgency, which are outlined in the revised British counter-insurgency doctrine, ought to be redefined as a spectrum across or within which, military and inter-agency personnel can operate. Insurgency could be categorised as a five-block model (consisting of gangs, militias, clans, tribes or global elements), each of which may be geographically, ethnically, religiously, politically and socially distinct.

The Ministry of Defence's Comprehensive Approach seeks to achieve greater understanding and openness; it has been successful in this limited respect. However, it is not designed to be cross government inter-agency policy that directs coordination, synchronisation, and military subordination. Moreover, DfID doctrine is immature, and insufficient joint exercising takes place, particularly at the tactical level. As with the American Armed Forces in Iraq, it is soldiers, not government or civilian officials that are actively engaged in non-military lines of operation; tasks for which soldiers are neither trained to do, nor ought to. Joint inter-agency counter-insurgency exercises/training needs to take place and inter-agency personnel should be routinely embedded within truly joint inter-agency pre-deployment training.

Current British Military doctrine recognises, in principle at least, the importance of political primacy and coalition functionality. However, there appears to be no mechanism for the default establishment or creation of a joint inter-agency headquarters or organisation within expeditionary counter insurgent operational theatres. The lack of a formal mechanism to establish a tactical level joint inter-agency headquarters, with explicit military subordination to political ends, and that is organized and commanded accordingly, is stark to say the least. Such a shortcoming must be remedied as a matter of urgency.

When General David Petraeus said that military action was necessary to improve security in Iraq but insufficient to end violence altogether,<sup>176</sup> he was not stating anything that is not written in existing British and American counter-insurgency doctrine - quite simply, his joint inter-agency doctrine was appropriately resourced. The British adoption of such a strategy in the future, outside a coalition context, is questionable. The requirement for “Mass”, or rather significant numbers of inter-agency personnel and soldiers, who are appropriately equipped, trained and organized, and that possess sufficient freedom of action, over a protracted period of time, is arguably both politically and popularly untenable. The only caveat to this would be if more limited strategic objectives were set, perhaps accepting modern limitations to traditional counter-insurgency doctrine – “fighting not to lose.” This represents a significant paradigm shift in the conduct of counter-insurgency operations, and does have implications for current “Thompsonian” counter-insurgency doctrine, particularly his primary principle relating to the need for a clear political aim in relation to the creation of a free, independent, and united country. By fighting not to lose, political and religious disunity may a fundamental requirement to appease destabilising elements within an insurgency; in other words, accepting that irreconcilable elements cannot be defeated or sufficiently isolated from the majority of the population.

Michael Maccoby, a Washington Post Journalist, recently stated that:

....we live in a multi-cultural world..... that our ability to influence others is significant but limited and we undermine our prestige and our own values by trying to force them on others.<sup>177</sup>

He is correct in his assertion. A focus on the affected population must be the primary driver for the successful counter-insurgency campaign design. In order to do so political ends must cater to geographically specific and popular aspirations; these in turn will temper or focus the appropriate civilian and military ways and means. Such ways and means protect the population and host nation government as a priority, whilst isolating and the defeating the insurgent. Such a focus might lead to uncomfortable ideological compromises for western democratic nations engaged in expeditionary counter-insurgency. As DfID’s UK guide to stabilisation states:

...good enough strategies, policies and plans...aim for what is required and adequate rather than

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<sup>176</sup> CNN, "No Military Solution to Iraq, U.S. General Says"

<http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/meast/03/08/iraq.petraeus/index.html> (accessed 8 August 2009).

<sup>177</sup> <http://views.washingtonpost.com/leadership/panelists/2009/09/hated-invaders.html?hpid=smartliving>.

ideal and complete.<sup>178</sup>

British Military and Interagency doctrine embraces Thompson's doctrine whilst emphasising the central position of the population to its counter-insurgency doctrine. However, the reality over the last eight years indicates that whilst such a focus could have been used, it was not, due to a number of factors, but predominantly a lack of balanced military and civilian capabilities. There is a greater focus now upon "partnering" and the rapid handover to indigenous counter-insurgency forces; this is no different to traditional counter-insurgency operations, but has a distinct backdrop - more kinetic military operations, and a reduced political willingness to sustain such operations over a protracted period due to war weariness at home and resource pressures. In addition, acceptable levels of security for an indigenous nation will most likely be very different to a western counterpart contributing to a counter-insurgency operation; this remains the case in Iraq and Afghanistan. Such contrasts have manifestly reduced agencies' abilities to support counter-insurgency, when bound by their own force protection regulations or national legislation. As such, there needs to be a review of inter-agency force protection regulations that affect theatres of operations, and more effective Strategic Communications at home – explaining the risk, the reasoning for it, and the benefits that will hopefully accrue. A failure to rectify the former shortcoming will perpetuate ineffective counter insurgency operations, by under-resourcing the decisive element of campaign: the civilian component.

The temporal dynamics within counter insurgencies cannot be overlooked. History emphasises that counter-insurgency operations take time. The importance of time and its impact, both negative and positive, for counter insurgents, insurgents and the affected populations, are critical. Time is needed for reconciliation and enculturation, the latter of which is key if significant social or political changes are part of counter-insurgency policy. Equally, time impacts negatively in the case of increased costs of policing, security, and even popularity at home.

In considering the conduct of counter-insurgency operations, Politicians and senior Military / Civil Service Officers would do well to note the similarities between ways and means of achieving the unintended benefits of Imperial policy in India, and the current generic British counter-insurgency

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<sup>178</sup> Department for International Development. p12.

principles, which are based upon those expounded by Sir Robert Thompson's. Much of post colonial success in counter-insurgency operations was as much a product of the imperial governance and development implemented in India as it was original thought in the post colonial period of British history. One could perhaps go further, contending that Thompson's doctrine was merely the first comprehensive codification of Indian Imperial policing experiences, and not that of Malaya.

Coincidentally, if one reviews the American Indian War, there exists an apt maxim for maintaining the focus upon the population and balancing the impact of social and political change, particularly in more complex religious or theologically based counter insurgencies. Brigadier General George Crook, the US Military Commander who brought about the resolution of the Apache Wars, said that his aim was "to make better Indians by treating them better.....to make first class Indians of them, instead of second class Americans."<sup>179</sup>

British counter-insurgency doctrine remains current and applicable, with the exception that it does appear to both expect and accept resource shortcomings. Whilst pragmatic, it increases the likelihood of a continued inability to "clear, hold and build." British counter-insurgency operations must be appropriately resourced at the commencement of the campaign, particularly in relation to the military component as the enabler for all other Lines of Operation. As the Chief of the General Staff stated at Chatham House on 17 September 2009, when reviewing the current strategic challenge regarding appropriate force structures required to meet future strategic threats (Irregular versus Nation on Nation):

If this, arguably at least our generation's horse and tank moment, is not gripped, our armed forces will try, with inadequate resources, to be all things to all conflicts and perhaps fail to succeed properly in any. The risks of such an approach are too serious for this any longer to be an acceptable course, if ever it has been. And as we look to how we must rebalance between types of conflict and reorganise our other national instruments of power to meet these future challenges, we must remain absolutely focused on delivering success in Afghanistan.<sup>180</sup>

Unfortunately, the allocation of resources alone is insufficient in itself as a means to achieve operational and strategic success within a counter-insurgency campaign. For success to be guaranteed, there needs to be explicit cross government recognition of the need for a greater acceptance of risk to the

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<sup>179</sup> Charles F. Lummis, *General Crook and the Apache Wars*, ed. Turbese Lummis Fiske, 1st ed.(Flagstaff, Arizona: Northland Press, 1966), pxv.

<sup>180</sup> General Sir David Richards.

“supported” civil agencies that deliver the decisive campaign effects to the population affected by the insurgency. Worryingly, there was no such recognition, nor evidence of a corresponding augmentation in the decisive civilian component, contained within President Obama’s address to the U.S. nation on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009 regarding the augmentation of 30, 000 soldiers to the Afghanistan theatre of operations.

More specifically, until there is formal recognition across all Government Departments that counter-insurgency is not a purely military operation, and that its strategic design and implementation are a civil responsibility, with military support as an enabler, disjointed and incoherent counter-insurgency operations will continue.

The fundamental nature of war has not changed. The fog and friction within the often more complex and nuanced counter-insurgency environment, is greater than its conventional counterpart. Clausewitz said that war is merely the continuation of politics by other means.<sup>181</sup> The current challenge faced by the British Army and its conduct of counter-insurgency operations is inextricably connected to this maxim. Unfortunately, that which the soldier was asked to undertake in Iraq, and remains so within Afghanistan, was not supported by policy – to be blunt, the war does not support the politics. The modern lack of political risk appetite, particularly regarding the deployment of non-military personnel that are central to successful counter-insurgency operations, serves little purpose other than to precipitate further futile expenditure of British treasure, and the blood of its soldiery. In light of an unlikely political resolution to such a contentious issue - of unifying the politics to warfare and on which the counter-insurgency doctrine is dependent - the most likely outcome is that for the next fifty years, the United Kingdom will not undertake expeditionary counter-insurgency operations. Only once two generations have passed is there more likely to be any appetite for a potential shift in attitude. Such a significant realignment of grand-strategic objectives will foreshadow a broad-based marshalling of existing capability to protect national interests using other non-military instruments of power alone. This will of course entail a reduction in the use of the military instrument of power (and with it, Defence expenditure), particularly in the conduct of counter-insurgency operations or expeditionary warfare.

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<sup>181</sup> Clausewitz, p99.

Maintenance of the status quo is not an acceptable choice, from a popular, political or military perspective.



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## Vita

Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Layton is an Infantry Officer in The Mercian Regiment. Having served for five years as a soldier, Lieutenant Colonel Layton was commissioned into The First Battalion the Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's) in 1989, which was based in West Germany, England and Northern Ireland. He deployed as an Armoured Infantry Platoon Commander during Operation DESERT SABRE, and served twice in Northern Ireland as a Multiple Commander and Company Second In Command. Lieutenant Colonel Layton also spent two years as Adjutant and Training Major within The Third Battalion The Staffordshire Regiment before returning to Northern Ireland as a Staff Officer within the Intelligence Branch. After completion of his initial staff appointment, he deployed to South Africa for six months in order to oversee the reintegration of former MK and APLA guerrillas into the South African National Defence Force.

Lieutenant Colonel Layton commanded Headquarters and Manoeuvre Support Companies in Northern Ireland and with the United Nations Force in Cyprus. After completion of his sub-unit command tour, Lieutenant Colonel Layton attended the Spanish Army Staff Course and the Spanish Joint Command and Staff Course in Madrid. His subsequent staff appointment was in Northern Ireland as the Principle Regional Military Intelligence Officer for both 3 and 8 Infantry Brigades respectively.

Lieutenant Colonel Layton returned to regimental duty in 2005 as Battalion Second In Command, which entailed two successive operational tours to Iraq, in Maysaan and Basrah. Before attendance at the Joint Forces Staff College, Lieutenant Colonel Layton was Chief of Staff within Headquarters 145 (South) Brigade. After completion of the Joint Advanced Warfighting Course, Lieutenant Colonel Layton is due to assume command of Birmingham University Officer Training Corps. Lieutenant Colonel Layton is married and has two children.